Rethinking the Wild Coast, South Africa. Eco-frontiers vs livelihoods in Pondoland

Sylvain Guyot, Julien Dellier

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Eco-frontiers vs livelihoods in Pondoland

Sylvain Guyot
Julien Dellier (Eds.)

This book is dedicated to Chloé and Héloïse

Contents

Foreword

Pondoland ? What is Pondoland all about ? What does it mean to study Pondoland ? 440 000 inhabitants only, less than 1% of the whole population of South Africa ? In an emerging country, well known on the world map for its political achievement, for eradicating both the colonial and the apartheid regimes and for its peaceful settlement, is there any point to have academics bickering about Pondoland, which is, at first glance, a “cul de sac” within South Africa ?

Why are so many people interested in Pondoland issues? To get off the road? To carry out fieldwork in a rural, scenic and often pristine environment? To be in touch with rural people, with real people mind, heart and values? Pondoland is far from the mines, and urban life blessed with South Africa, cities are known and even praised for. Far from any urban centre or metropolitan area, Pondoland seems to be the last outpost of the New South Africa, a so called eco-frontier where natural resources have to be protected and where mankind lives in harmony with nature, a kind of enactment of Eden. Too beautiful to be true ! So, are there any relevant issues that might be addressed about Pondoland ? It is the first question the ignorant but curious social scientist might ask.

In fact, Pondoland is more than a tiny and anonymous piece of rural land in South Africa. Pondoland made history. Proud Pondo people fought against their colonial masters, an episode known as the Pondo revolt. So Pondoland kept a strong identity over the years, even when it was part of the Transkei Bantustan. It kept it till today. In a way, the Pondoland history shows what resistance and resilience are all about. It is the reason why Pondoland is neither a marginal land nor an undocumented area.

Many of scholars carry out researches on Pondoland as a case study, being at the crossroads of several issues : colonisation, land rights, identity or natural resources,

they used Pondoland as a research lab. The different chapters of this book show an interesting debate that deserves to be developed.

First of all, what is the proportion of income gained from land-based sources, e-g. is it arable and livestock farming and the collection of a range of natural resources [3%, 4%, 8% on average in Cutwini, 20% per cent on average for livestock owners, a lot…]? Whatever the percentage is, trying to get such a breakdown sounds relevant, but it did not tell us how many long hours people are working to make land-based resources part of their living and whether rural work hours are even accounted for. If the market value of the rural work hour is close to nil, the questions are at market value: are there still any farmers left here for, and, if yes, engaging what type of agriculture (Jacobson in Chapter 8)? How many families remain engaged in rural activities on a daily basis? What does this mean and how do we think about it?

In such a case, how do we measure the market value of land-based resources and of rural work time? Who has the power to decide upon market value? Remembering that crude oil on the spot market cost 142 $ per barrel in July 2008 and 30 $ per barrel in December 2008 and knew erratic differences in less than 5 months in a very controlled market… To guess what is the market value of firewood, wild berries, roots and fruits, maize, bananas, and even cattle and fish (Mniki, in Chapter 5), etc. in a very localised market is the real issue.
Notwithstanding the market value of natural sceneries, unspoilt water and fresh air available in Pondoland, nobody even thought to account for them. Nevertheless, many scholars acknowledge when access to natural ressources will be even more problematic, that market values of available natural externalities will skyrocket.

Natural resources have no market value so far. But if local Pondo people behave sometimes, as suggested in a chapter, like in "the Tragedy of the Commons" where multiple individuals acting independently in their own self-interest can ultimately destroy a shared limited resource, with no market value... Even when it is clear that it is not in anyone's long term interest for this to happen… It looks logical, and there is no point to kill Hardin’s theory. They might have partly destroyed their own environment, whether degradation is more a narrative than an established fact has yet to be further researched for. Nevertheless some arguments whether

degradation is more a discourse than a scientifically established fact and figure look really convincing (Hadju in Chapter 6). This would show at least that people are working hard and are not lazy, as sometimes heard about, neither to plough their fields, and more often their gardens, nor to run their livestock. Any decline in cultivation is quite difficult to appraise especially in the context of high unemployment.

It is less a question of laziness than a question of acknowledgement that the majority of the Pondo people are (and mostly were over 60 year old) involved in labour migration, are locally employed, and more and more are living on pension or social grants that have increased spending power. Anyway, even if “agrarian economy remains of some significance” (Beinart in Chapter 7), Pondoland illustrates the idea, and sometimes the cliché about rural areas in South Africa (especially former homelands) that shows rural areas as just the spatial extension of mining and urban economy. Whether the cliché reflects the truth is another story. Be they rural areas or just extension of urban areas, the Pondoland is certainly not loosing population : figures shows that population of Pondoland is growing rapidly.

Local people, farmers or not, are not the only stakeholders in Pondoland, a place that looks sometimes overcrowded with civil servants from various departments, project’s managers, hard and human sciences scholars, biodiversity conservationists, would-be miners, NGO’s personnel, trekking tourists (only on coastal Pondoland renamed Wild Coast for marketing’s reasons) and all kind of “outsiders” (Dellier et Guyot in Chapter 3) at large. What are and where are their interests? Each outsider is having “big appetite” and his/her own agenda to follow as far as Pondoland is concerned. The papers collected by the editors for one the publication made from the Limoges conference held in May 2009, show a comprehensive list of stakeholder’s agendas.

Year after year, Pondoland becomes more important as a zone for environmental protection and tourism and its role as an eco-frontier becomes really at stake…. Amongst the several strategies that have been attempted to achieve the new status of an eco-frontier has been the creation of buffer zones, “broadly defined as areas in which activities are implemented with the aim of enhancing the positive and

reducing the negative impacts of conservation on neighbouring communities and of neighbouring communities on conservation" (Kepe and Whande in Chapter 4). In conceiving environmental changes and conflicts on coastal Pondoland, we have to keep in mind colonial and apartheid era history, as well as public policies (if any) that were implemented after 1994, but also the permanently changing patterns of local life. We have to understand that the real stakeholders are the Pondo people and nobody else, probably not the outsiders.

Consequently, Pondo people might be getting a kind of disease named "planning fatigue" (Simukonda and Kraai in Chapter 2) out of the multiple and changing agendas carried by outsiders. Let the locals decide on their own about their future. They are responsible grown-ups. Otherwise another Pondo revolt might be on their agenda. As fierce as the first one !

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Acknowledgements

The Editors would like to express their appreciation and thanks to all the authors, to Benoît Antheaume and to the following institutions :

University of Limoges, France

Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique
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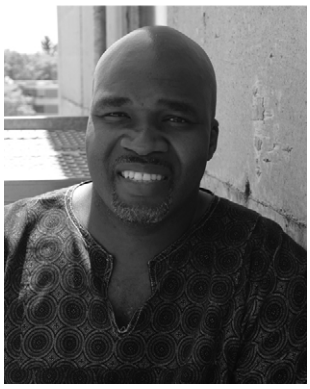

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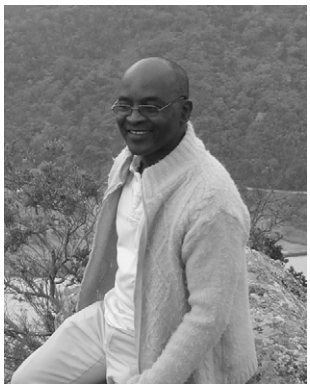

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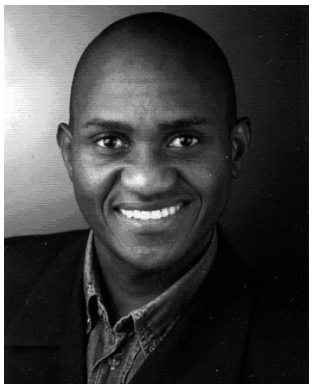

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Geographer currently based at the University of Cologne's Institute for Social Anthropology in Germany where he coordinates an Africa programme on Human Mobility, Livelihoods and Natural Resources Management. Webster is also a Research Associate for the RUZIVO Trust in Harare, Zimbabwe where he conducts research on transboundary natural resources management in southern Africa. He has previously worked for the Institute for Poverty, Land and Agrarian Studies in Cape Town, South Africa where he coordinated a regional Southern Africa Community-based Natural Resources Management Programme.

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The Transkei Land Service Organisation (TRALSO) was formed in 1990 in response to the growing demand for the resolution of the land question that had by then reached crisis proportions. Its area of operation remains being the stretch of territory from the Kei River in the South and the Umzimkulu river in the North, with a rather elastic inland border basking in the foot of the Drakensberg Mountain range. This area is called the Transkei. From the turn of the 19th century it symbolized the last frontier of Xhosa resistance to colonial incursion. In the 1950?s it was to be a testing ground for the infamous apartheid sponsored homeland system.Today, after sixteen years of re-incorporation into South Africa, it bears the scars of decades of botched rural planning schemes, utter neglect and an extremely decadent Bantustan ruling elite. The principal legacy of all these episodes is ongoing economic stagnation, acute landlessness and an unemployment rate that is exacerbated by the ongoing retrenchments from the industrial centres and mines of South Africa. The Transkei area is regarded as the poorest part of the Eastern Cape.

TRALSO works with rural communities and individuals seeking access to land. This mandate extends to the support of efforts aimed at household food security and sustainable livelihoods. TRALSO aligns itself with the government's programme of land reform as initiated in 1994. This support is critical in nature in that the organisation reserves the right to question policy or implementation aspects of the programme and propose more democratic alternatives.

1

General Introduction

Julien Dellier, Sylvain Guyot

Figure 1.1: Rural Hamlet in Xolobeni, Coastal Pondoland, South Africa (picture: J. Dellier, 2008)

Note: All the places mentioned in the different chapters are located on a general map, figure X, page 229.

1. Background to the book

This book has been written by a team of researchers coming from different geographical and cultural backgrounds. The group of contributors is composed of six Europeans (three French, two Swedishs, one British) and four Africans (three South Africans, one living in Canada and one Zambian). Consequently, links and exchanges

made between the authors are rich in terms of exposure to different scientific backgrounds, traditions and ideas.

This book has become a reality due to two main dynamics.

The first dynamic is the intensive work done in the field, in Pondoland, by all of the authors of this book, sometimes meeting to do surveys together (like Julien Dellier and Sylvain Guyot with Lizile Mniki for example). Consequently all the contributors have something in common: they know very well the field and their inhabitants and stakeholders.

The second dynamic is the meeting of all these authors forming a thematic team at an International Conference on Eco-frontiers (University of Limoges, France, 27-30 May 2009[1]). Then, we all agreed to write this book to have evidence of our lively discussions, our real passion for Pondoland (and the Wild Coast!) and its people. The editors like to thank warmly all the contributors. Indeed, they hope that this book is only a first step for future collective publications and meetings on this unique territory.

This book is widely open to discussion. Readers, please send us your comments!

[1] We like to thank the University of Limoges and the "Région Limousin" (France) for funding the whole research project (C2R – Gestion Sociopolitique de l'environnement dans les pays du sud) and part of the International Conference.

Figure 1.2: Eco-frontier landscape, First Beach, Port St Johns, South Africa (picture: J. Dellier, 2008)

Box n°1.1: What are eco-frontiers? (Guyot, 2009)

An "Eco-frontier" is a tri-dimensional idea.[2] Firstly, it is an (already) existing notion, normalized, used and instrumentalized by groups of stakeholders, like environmental NGOs producing multi-scaled green geopolitics. Secondly, it is a psycho-mental, spatial and political representation, conveyed by a westernised imagery of nature. Finally, eco-frontier is also a 'spatial category' overlying 'territorial process' that can be understood through different parameters producing conflicting political appropriations.

Transversally, eco-frontiers are real or mental spaces marked by strong ecological and aesthetic values which are coveted by various stakeholders. Many types of ecological appropriations imply different conflicting categories of eco-frontiers. Eco-frontiers are transitory and temporary spaces characterised by specific geographical parameters: a pioneer gateway opened to a remote and low population density area, weakly bounded by unattainable limits; an ecological appropriation done virtually or physically by groups of eco-settlers; and a group of local inhabitants offering mixed reactions. Eco-frontiers create very complex situations for stakeholders disputing different legitimacies based on different uses of ecosystems, resources, or land. Winning ecological appropriations tends to shape new territorial patterns: e.g., conservation enclave, urban sprawl related to tourism activity or peri-urbanisation.

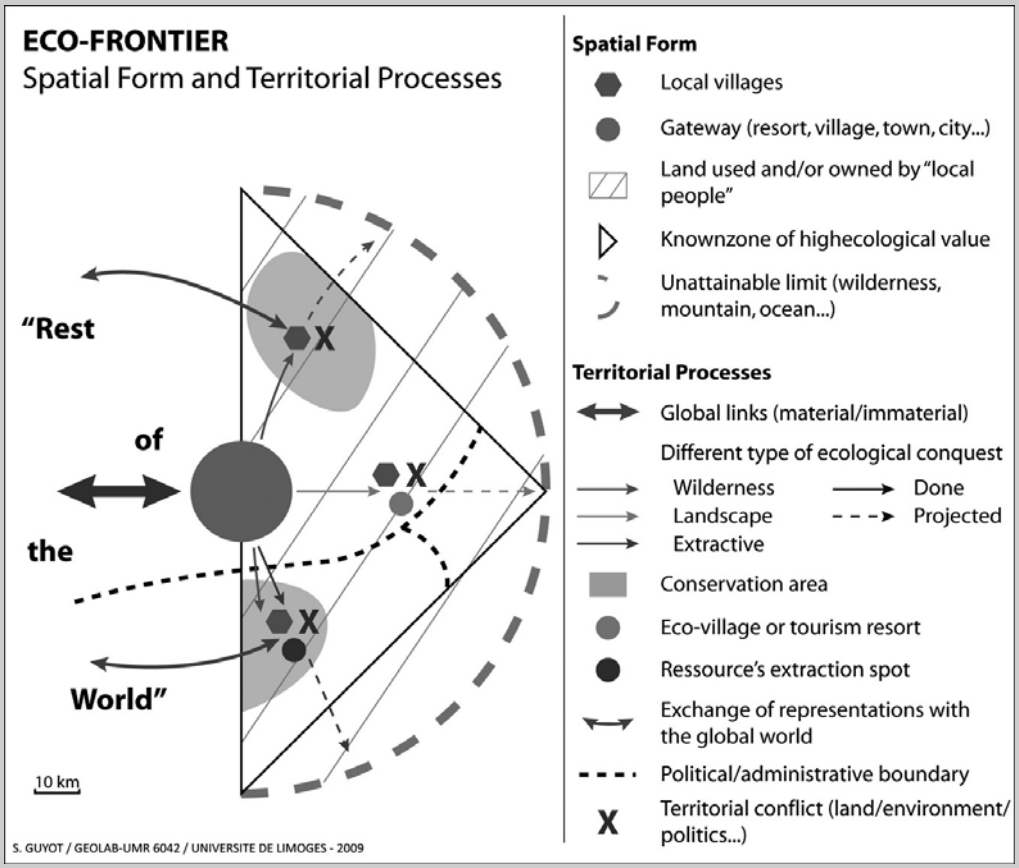

Figure 1.3: Model of eco-frontier (Guyot, 2009)

[2]Sylvain Guyot, 2009, Fronts écologiques et éco-conquérants : définitions et typologies, on press : *CYBERGEO*.

Figure 1.4: Road to the eco-frontier, crossing ruralities, Pondoland, South Africa (Picture: J. Dellier, 2008)

2. A book to clarify current territorial dynamics in Pondoland

Pondoland (part of the former Bantustan 'Transkei') remains a rural African territory in South Africa. Livelihoods have always been crucial to sustain the local population.

During colonial times and Apartheid, outsider's appropriations of Pondoland are geographically peripherical but quite intrusive in terms of land and resource control. Appropriations were done mainly through trading stations, few permanent white settlements (coastal tourism resorts), and natural resources reservation (protection of forest, coastal nature reserves etc.). The "Wild Coast", used to name the Transkei coast (including the section of the Pondoland coast), symbolises this European aesthetical representation of a beautiful area with a low population density.

Box n°1.2 : Pondoland and the Wild-Coast

The Pondoland is located in Eastern Cape province (South Africa). It was part of the former Transkei. The boundaries of this region are the Mtamvuna River at the north, which is also the limit between Eastern Cape province and Kwazulu-Natal province, and the Mthatha River at the south. The Mzimvubu River divides the region into West Pondoland and East Pondoland. It was settled by the Pondo during the 16th century.

The Wild-Coast is the coastal stretch between the Great Kei River and the Mtamvuna River. It is made up of seven local municipalities : Mbizana, Qaukeni, Port St Johns, Nyandeni, King Sabata Dalindyebo, Mbhashe and Mnquma. This name is officialy used essentialy for tourism purpose.

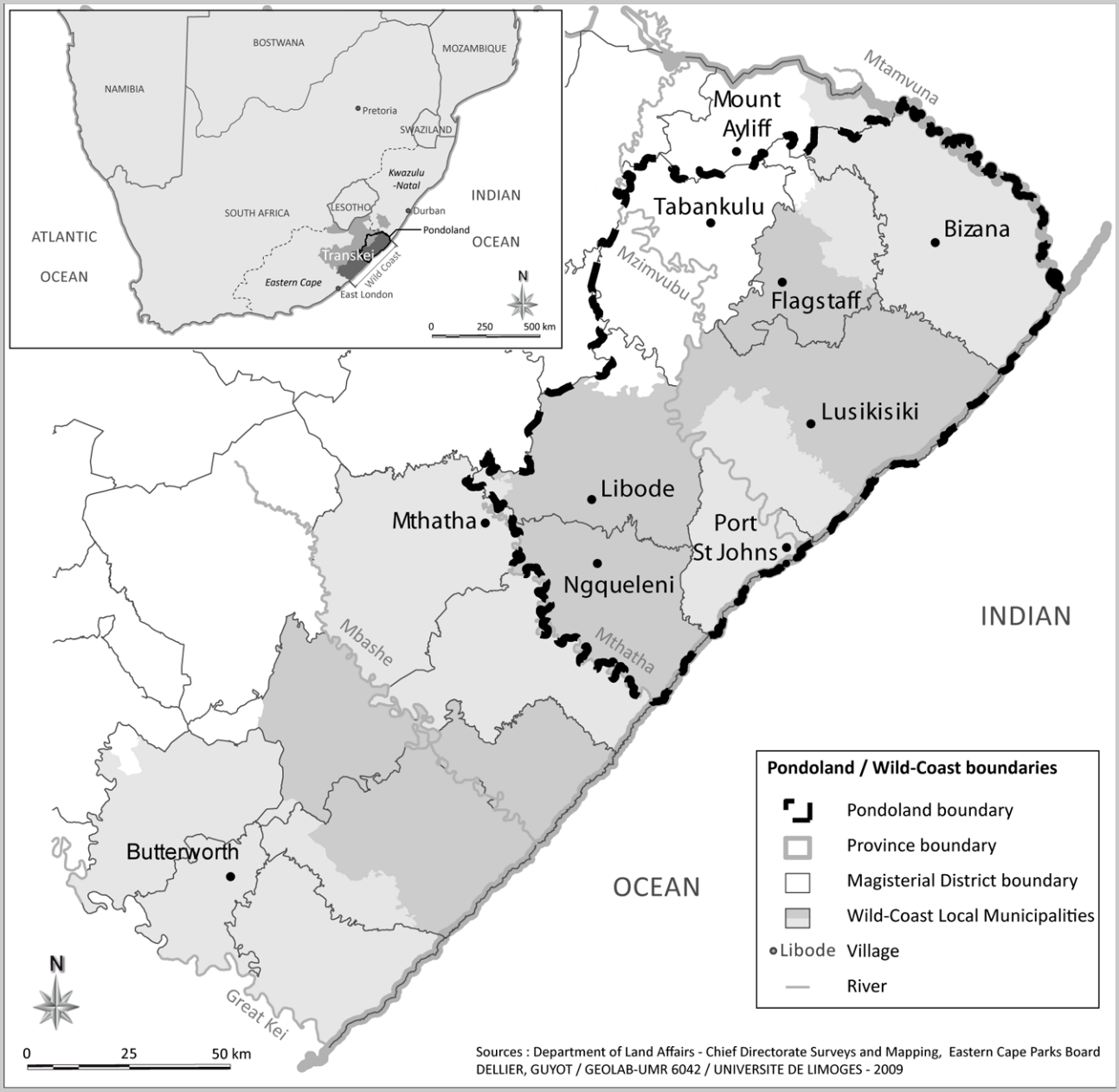

Figure 1.5 : Map of Pondoland and the Wild Coast

The end of apartheid opens an era of potential changes for the Pondoland territory, starting with the lodging of land claims on former seized land. *De facto*, the links between Pondoland and the rest of South Africa and the world are possibly stronger. If Pondo people living and working elsewhere bring back a lot to the communities, if local practices through farming have to adapt to the global economy, new outsiders' appropriations are, as well, a reality to consider. As an example, the "Wild Coast" is confirmed as the branding name for the coastal Pondoland to become a major eco-tourist attraction. Tourism developers, environmental NGO's and local politicians are working towards an individualisation – even partition? - of the coast from its rural hinterland.

This reading may be relevant to understand eco-frontiers processes affecting mostly the coastal part of Pondoland. Nevertheless, it has to be completed by other approaches highlighting farming dynamics and the use of alternative resources, happening in both coastal and hinterland areas. If the "Wild Coast" might be a symbol for eco-frontiers, the Pondoland territory as a whole is addressing, as well, other controversial ruralities. Indeed, the control of Pondoland by external forces is a highly disputable paradigm. Therefore this book is totally dedicated to this discussion. Different contributions offer contrasted perspectives on Pondoland territorial issues.

Rather than trying to reach an elusive compromise on such sensitive issues, editors have chosen to respect the diversity and the richness of the different points of views expressed by the authors, who sometimes contradict or challenge each others: "The floor is always and still open for debates and questions"!

3. Presentation of the different chapters

This book[3] is organised in eight chapters highlighting a large diversity of views and realities on Pondoland.

[3] All these chapters have been discussed, commented and corrected collectively and individually by all the authors and peer-reviewed by an international expert. Nevertheless, each author or group of authors is sole responsible for the opinions and views expressed in their own chapter.

The three first chapters, following the introduction, are dedicated to the eco-frontier paradigm is its “land dispute” dimension.

- ➔ Chapter two, written by Navy Simukonda and Mcebisi Kraai, present the different territorial conflicts in Pondoland from a “land rights” NGO perspective.

- ➔ Chapter three, written by Drs Julien Dellier and Sylvain Guyot, uses the concept of eco-frontier to understand land issues on the “Wild Coast” or “Pondoland Coast”.

- ➔ Chapter four, written by Drs Thembela Kepe and Webster Whande, show how eco-frontiers processes through biodiversity conservation have created many overlapping layers of buffer-zones near the villages, disturbing the access to natural resources for local communities.

The four last chapters concentrate on controversial ruralities, showing the complexity of analysing local practices and knowledges.

- ➔ Chapter five, written by Lizile Mniki, studies the coastal Indian Ocean as a space of conflicts. He shows a reality of subsistence fishing along the Pondoland coast that contradicts the dominant narratives on the overuse of marine resources.

- ➔ Chapter six, written by Dr. Flora Hajdu, is pulling apart dominant representations and narratives on land degradation. In fact, she shows evidence of under-use of natural resources by local communities.

- ➔ Chapter seven, written by Prof. W. Beinart, uses tick issues and livestock diseases to challenge the efficiency of current local knowledge and practices in relation to the legacy of external management done during the apartheid era.

➔ Chapter eight, written by Klara Jacobson, discusses the interest of the "Massive Food Production Program" for smallholders, introducing commercial farming methods at this scale.

2

The Wild Coast: the Contested Territory

Navy Simukonda, Mcebisi Kraai

On the Road to the Wild Coast, rural pondoland (picture : J. Dellier, 2009)

1. Introduction to Eco-frontiers and spatial process

Eco-frontiers are places of pristine biodiversity and scarce, but valuable natural resources e.g. water, minerals, forest, local knowledge (Guyot 2008). The Wild Coast of the Eastern Cape, South Africa is such an area and is characterised by specific ecological dimensions and values. The ecological value of the Wild Coast has often been represented by its unique landscape, beautiful rivers, valleys and open vast

forest land that has rapidly opened up to accessibility to outsiders in the last 30 years. According to Guyot (2008), globally, eco-frontiers have remained strategic areas with regard to the future of nature resources and global change.

TRALSO is presenting this paper with the aim of showing the different contestations currently happening in the Wild Coast region of the former homeland of Transkei in the name of development or uplifting the rural poor. TRALSO has been working in the Wild Coast since 1991 on various interventions such as land restitution programmes, community facilitation, mentorship programmes (capacity building) and conflict resolutions processes, etc. The paper starts by introducing the Wild Coast, then issues which make the Wild Coast to be, the contested terrain, the contesters, and other roles players involved and concludes by highlighting critical issues that we think should guide and inform the current contesters in formulating good policies and interventions that will benefit the people living in the Wild Coast.

The paper is not about TRALSO but about the current issues that seem to marginalize the already marginalized and deprived rural poor living in the Wild Coast. We do not base our work and information gathered by other bona fides, but on the practical issues at hand.

In presenting these issues we do not want to portray our selves as being unbiased and neutral players because we are biased towards the rural poor, marginalised and voiceless. We work with them so that their voice should be heard and thus this is not an academic paper for scoring marks.

Information used to present the issues of contestation was gathered through TRALSO's own interventions, community projects review meetings, TRALSO's own observation in situation analysis exercises, participatory household livelihoods security assessments, and where possible also through literature review of local news and current affairs of both print and electronic media. Furthermore, TRALSO has been also involved in some of the processes e.g. in the toll road and mining public hearings where we participate as interested parties and/or a party representing the claimants of the communities along the Wild Coast.

2. Introduction to the Wild Coast of the Eastern Cape, South Africa

The Wild Coast is an area of high biodiversity of both local and international significance. According to the OR Tambo IDP (2009/10), more than 72% of the population in the Wild Coast live in poverty. It therefore be argued that the Wild Coast region is also one of the poorest areas in the country with subsistence use of local resources contributing extensively to local livelihoods.

The area is largely under-developed with a sizable percentage of its unique biodiversity in place. Its global significance is attributed to the diversity and endemism of the grasslands, marine environment, and mangroves, as well as the fact that it contains part of the Maputaland-Pondoland Region (MPR), which is recognized as an important centre of floristic diversity and endemism in Africa (Davies et al. 1994, van Wyk et al. 2000).

The importance of the biodiversity heritage of this area is recognized by the National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment (NSBA), which recognizes this area as containing two of the nine biodiversity priority areas in the country. Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF, 2004) through its National Biodiversity Action Plan highlights the importance of more detailed planning in this area to identify important areas and resources and to harness their potential to contribute to sustainable livelihoods. The direct use value of biodiversity in the Wild Coast (including both consumptive use and tourism) represented as a ratio to the Eastern Cape's provincial GDP for 2003 (R101 billion) at 2003 prices; (Statistics South Africa, 2004) ranges between 0.24 – 0.71%. However, the Wild Coast makes up only about 3% of the area of the Eastern Cape.

Geographically, the Wild Coast covers hundreds of coastal land starting from the Kei River in the Amathole District municipality and Mtamvuna River on the border Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal respectively. In additional to its natural beauty, the Wild Coast is characterised by rare vegetation with many endemic species as well as its unique floral endowments, it remains to be one of the poorest regions in the country. In some areas; over 80% of the population lives in poverty (W CSPR, 2005).

The total estimated population of Wild Coast is 440 000, of which approximately 71% live below the poverty line while the unemployment rate is estimated at 67% (OR Tambo IDP, 2005, Conservation and Sustainable Use in the Wild Coast Report, 2005). While the Wild Coast has a significant subsistence and informal economy, the formal economy is extremely small when compared to the rest of the Province. The endemic poverty and related unemployment in the Wild Coast is linked with lack of access to clean water, sanitation, health care and schools. Levels of infrastructure development are well behind national averages and are poorest in the densely-populated rural areas of the Wild Coast.

Subsistence use of resources is critical to the survival of the majority of the population. The under-development of the area has enabled a large percentage of its unique biodiversity to persist. This bio diversity has attracted significant attention from conservationists and other nature lovers. There is however increasing pressure from unplanned development, which has the potential to rapidly erode the natural resource base, without distributing its potential long-term benefits equitably to the majority of the people who are mainly unemployed in the area.

Recognizing this complex and challenging context, there have been a number of developmental projects in the Wild Coast whose vision has been to promote "utilization of the natural resources of the Wild Coast in a sustainable and equitable manner which maximizes the benefits for all people of the area whilst at the same time ensuring its long-term ecological integrity". However, the Wild Coast itself presents a particular challenge for public participation in terms of the inaccessible nature of the terrain and the complex nature of the institutional and traditional structures. In addition, there is a history of unsuccessful project implementation, which has led to skepticism on the ground. This is exacerbated by the fact that the products of the many processes have been plans, which in some senses are abstract and removed from people's daily lives.

Furthermore, the number of development and planning initiatives in the area have greatly confused the people and resulted in planning *"fatigue"*. Expectations of the people have never been carefully managed as most projects planned in the area are implemented at a snail's pace thus delaying flows of benefits in some areas.

3. TRALSO's involvement in the Wild Coast

TRALSO has been involved in people's land struggles since inception. During the period from 1994 – 1998 assisted hundreds communities to lodge their claims with the Eastern Cape's Regional Land Claims Commission (RLCC) using the Restitution of Land Rights Act 22 of 1994. TRALSO has therefore worked with more than two hundred (200) rural communities between 1998-2009. Some of these communities are in the Wild Coast. The work has centred mainly on issues of pre and post settlement processes. By 2004, it was evident that the government was struggling hard to reach the 30% mark which was the target for settlement of the restitution claims. New threats were emerging against the vulnerable tenure rights of rural communities especially those living in coastal lands earmarked for various development schemes. A cardinal weakness of the land reform programme has been its reliance on market mechanisms to influence the tone and pace of land reform. In themselves the government policies are indicative of the constraints globalization imposed on South Africa's liberation (TRALSO, 2005).

After several years engaging with South Africa's land reform, and for a number of reasons, TRALSO recognized fully the need to empower the directly affected communities to sustain existing and anticipated land struggles. In concept TRALSO envisioned a loosely organized community structures, well disciplined and schooled in modern forms of organisation and with sufficient institutional resources to engage the forces threatening the survival of rural communities. The most imminent and pervading threat faced the communities living on the Wild Coast, a 240-kilometer stretch of coast along the Transkei area bordering the Indian Ocean. Whereas there has emerged a powerful lobby protesting the destruction of the endemism characteristic of the coastal biome, such a lobby remains politically vulnerable as it is not grounded in the people and it does not speak to the issues of land rights and local control of natural resources.

TRALSO has been working with the communities of the Wild Coast since its inception in 1991. Most of TRALSO work has focused on community facilitation, institutional strengthening, capacity building, conflict resolution, and other land reform interventions. With TRALSO's assistance, the main communities of Greenville,

Hlolweni, Mfolozi, Mgungundlovu (Mzamba), Mkambati, Caguba, Hluleka and Cwebe-Dwesa all successfully lodged their claims with the Regional Land Claims Commission (RLCC). Of these, only the Mzamba and Hluleka claims are still outstanding whilst the rest have been successfully resolved and the land claimants have been resettled though without title ownership to their land.

TRALSO's main experience in working in the Wild Coast has been drawn from the implementation of the Wild Coast Empowerment and Monitoring Project (WEMP). The objective of the Wild Coast Empowerment and Monitoring Project was to help strengthen community control of local resources and security of the land rights of rural communities of the Wild Coast. The purpose of the project was to build and provide institutional support to Land Trusts, Communal Property Associations (CPAs) and build relations of solidarity within and among the land claiming communities of Mkambati, Hluleka and Dwesa-Cwebe.

Based on TRALSO's involvement in the Wild Coast, it has become clear that lack of recognition of existing institutional structures and issues among stakeholders and members of the rural communities has contributed to the current conflicts and led to unsuccessful implementation of many initiatives in the Wild Coast. There is lack of and/or weakness of viable social institutions to champion and take custody of communal land rights. Government policy on land tenure is confusing to say the least and there has been a proliferation of simultaneous policy directions towards traditional forms and elected institutions. Secondly, the Wild Coast is home to some of the deepest pockets of poverty in the country. The government launched in 1996 the Wild Coast Spatial Development Initiative (SDI) as a maneuver to attract investment in the area. There is however a tussle regarding an industrial strategy for the Wild Coast. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism has championed, since 1994, eco-tourism as the flagship initiative towards the economic development of the area. Whilst this is rather laudable, it has tended to be antagonistic or at least parallel to the Department of Land Affairs' drive to restore land rights to past victims of removals and ensuring security of land tenure.

On the other hand the Departments of Trade and Industry (DTI), Minerals and Energy Affairs and to some extent Public Works have associated themselves with

overtures towards mineral exploration and extraction and the proposed construction of a Wild Coast N2 Toll Road. A consortium of all the major construction companies has put up an unsolicited bid with the apparent support of the National Roads Agency.

TRALSO has thus far avoided the temptation to be pulled into the ensuing debate as all sides seem now to be blinded to facts and devoid of the real interests of the communities despite extolling and bandying "community interests/benefits".

4. The nature of conflicts in the Wild Coast: What are the issues?

Events in recent years have shown all too clearly that land access is an economic and political issue lying at the heart of many conflicts in South Africa. In many instances, the question of land tenure sparks rivalries and social unrest. The economic potential of the Wild Coast has brought about a variety of stakeholders and new power imbalances over control of the natural resources. For example, increased market value of natural resources along the Wild Coast plus then potential contribution of these resources to social and economic development of the rural communities fuel conflicts over ownership and resource use. Individual communities, traditional leaders and the local authorities all claim ownership of a stake.

4.1 Conflicting Land Rights

Land, law and land tenure are still unresolved problems cementing rural poverty and underdevelopment in the Wild Coast. Land has emerged to be a critical production factor and asset in the Wild Coast because secure land rights impact on investment and rural development in the Wild Coast region. There have been major disputes about who controls communal land in the Wild Coast. The lack of clarity on who holds what user rights to resources and how best these resources are to be managed has led to a number of unresolved tensions in the area.

Population growth, unemployment, urbanisation and the degradation of the environment have all contributed to making land rights a critical issue in the development and management of natural resources in the Wild Coast. Most communities along the Wild Coast continue to live under informal land rights arrangements. Individual land rights and/or collective or state controlled systems all exist along the Wild Coast. All these systems make legal land rights picture hazy. As at now, government has not yet implemented the Communal Land Rights Act (CLaRA), the long awaited overarching land tenure legislation which seeks to deal with the inherited legacies in the land and agrarian sectors in communal areas of South Africa.

According to this legislation, the higher order objectives have to do with the social and economic development of the communal areas through the provisioning of security of tenure and access to land on an equitable basis to people living in communal areas. The higher order objectives have also to do with the introduction of broad-based democratic system of land administration to manage and administer the land and land rights belonging to a community.

CLaRA is also expected to give effect to the imperatives of the Rural Development Programme, which is crucial in uplifting thousands of rural poor people living in the Wild Coast. According to the Department of Land Affairs (DLA, 2007), the Department would require a substantial increase in its budget in order to implement CLaRA. This means that as long as there is lack of funds the land rights and issues being experienced by people living in the Wild Coast will continue to persist and pose serious challenges to development sustain current conflicts. The strongest and the wealthiest take advantage of the conflicting land rights system to grab land for their personal gains. This makes establishment of sustainable projects impossible!

4.2 Rural Livelihoods and Poverty in the Wild Coast

A high percentage of communities are living in an area well endowed with natural resources yet they live in abject poverty. HIV/AIDS and literacy are some of the factors that have an adverse impact on rural communities living in the Wild Coast.

Kepe (1997a) identified several clusters of livelihoods sources in one village (Mkambati) locality. The clusters according to Kepe are grouped around activities which are supplementary to those considered as basic by the majority of the local people and the activities have been found to be consistent with those observed elsewhere along the Wild Coast concluding that the main livelihoods revolve around similar activities regardless where people are located within the Wild Coast. The poor communities have for many centuries relied on a diverse source for their livelihoods, cattle, cropping, wild fruit and vegetables, thatching grass, hunting wild animals, growing marijuana and marine resources such as crayfish, mussels etc. The main three clusters identified by Kepe (1997a) are migrant remittance, commuter employment, and skilled labour such as building. It is well believed that better access to land, secure and transferable land rights, as well as good land reform measures would improve people's ability to improve their living condition (Wild Coast Sustainable Project Report, 2005).

4.3 Lack of infrastructure

There have been many years of neglect by previous regimes namely the National Party and Matanzima government never invested in the Wild Coast. This can perhaps be attributed to the resistance of these communities to being subjected to unjust laws such as the implementation of betterment policy, which resulted in the Pondo Revolt of Ingquza. There are no better schools and some schools are still mud schools, no adequate health facilities, and no communication network. Most roads are still graveled; the byways unused and the population still live as they have done for centuries. There are many things that have been left undisturbed and

unawakened by the busy outside world. The modern era has not affected or changed this gorgeous area.

4.4 Conservation of the Wild Coast

The Wild Coast is the only true coastal wilderness left along the Indian Ocean in South Africa and is a vital part of the Pondoland botanic centre of endemism, one of the world's 235 hot spots of biodiversity. The grassland and forested valleys are home to more than 200 endemic plants, including the rare Pondo Bushman's teak tree that can live for 1 000 years.
The endangered-crowned crane is a common sight in the area. The Wild Coast provides an excellent laboratory for testing the achievements of conservation objectives on communal lands.

The National Spatial Biodiversity Assessment report (2004) estimated that 30-50% of South Africa's communal lands occur in priority conservation areas, potentially suited to the application of the co-management systems piloted through the project.

Furthermore, the Wild Coast is located within the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany 'hotspot', and is listed along with Upper Guinea, Cameroon Highlands, Albertine Rift, Ethiopian Highlands, Eastern Arc and coastal forests, Madagascar and the Cape Fynbos - as having a deficient protected area system, which needs to be urgently expanded and strengthened to improve the bio-geographic coverage of protected areas and most endangered in Africa (Olsen & Dinerstein 2002). With some 70,000 ha of demarcated indigenous forests in 1,300 unconsolidated individual forest patches, the Wild Coast represents the largest area of indigenous forest left on the southeast coast of Africa. The Wild Coast has the most southerly distribution of mangrove forests, linked to the warm sub-tropical marine currents and forms part of an important transition zone between the warmer, sub-tropical waters off KwaZulu Natal Province and the cooler warm-temperate waters of the Eastern Cape Province. A number of Indo-Pacific species are found at their southernmost limit of

distribution (e.g. Stylophora), while some warm-temperate species occur at the northernmost limit of their distribution range (e.g. Chrysoblephus laticeps). Southern Africa has a total of 227 endemic coastal fish species. The Wild Coast is important for fish conservation constituting a center of distribution for a number of over-exploited endemic line fish (CSUW 2005).

5. Control and Management of Resources

Because of the above, the government has been aiming at establishing various co-managed non-traditional protected areas that it wants to use as pilots so as to provide valuable models for replication in comparable situations throughout the province. To this end, government is linking its conservation effort with the National Knowledge Management System housed in the South African National Biodiversity Institute's (SANBI) Collaborative Learning Center that will ensure that lessons learnt and best practice documented are actively disseminated to inform conservation initiatives focusing on co-management models on communal lands throughout South Africa and wider region.

As a result of a lack of skills and employment opportunities in the Wild Coast, rural communities in the area tend to have a high dependency on their natural environment to sustain their livelihoods. However, the continuous unmanaged use of natural resources by a growing population in a context of institutional failure will inevitably over time lead to environmental degradation and depletion of these resources.

5.1 Access to and control of natural resources

The establishment of the proposed Pondo Park is another significant issue. At the moment, conservation activities within the Wild Coast are happening in four main nature reserves- Mkambati, Silaka, Hluleka, and Dwesa Cwebe. There are also proposals to develop a Mtamvuna Conservancy and Pondo Park which could cover

most of the bio-diversity hotspots in the area between Mzimvubu River and Msikaba River. This has come with a lot of opposition from the communities who feel the park will deny them total access to their natural resource on which their livelihoods depend.

There is a concern that protection of forests will result in lack of access to important traditional resources considering the fact that the current enforcement in the four conservation nature reserves is not equitable.

5.2 Illegal Cottage Owners

Construction of illegal cottages along the Wild Coast has been one of the strongest issues that has been argued and debated in public forums and inside and outside the courts of law. According to the Sustaining the Wild Coast Lobby group, a decree had to be enacted in order to afford protection to this special coastline. Decree n°9 (Environmental Conservation) of 1992 was enacted during the Bantustan era that established a "coastal conservation area" 1000m inland from the high water mark.

This Decree spelled out a long list of activities that could not be undertaken without a permit. This included the clearing of land, erecting any building, developing any picnic area, Caravan Park or like amenity, construct any public or private road, lay any pipeline, and build any septic tank. While this State Land cannot be bought, some visitors wanting to occupy a little piece of paradise, tried to illegally acquire permission by bribing local headmen to build cottages. As a result, cottages sprung up without any measure of control and this begun to impact negatively on the environment

The fact that most of the land has been under the administration of traditional leaders on behalf of the state, there has been a big problem where by wealthy individuals, mostly white, have continued to build cottage by exploiting the corrupt traditional leaders (Kepe, 2001). They bought land very cheaply and built the cottages in environmental sensitive and coastal conservation areas as they are

clearly situated within a zone one kilometer from the sea. Cottage owners hardly complied with the requirements of the law as no Environmental Impact Assessments (E.I.As) are conducted. The erection of cottages and other structures has been going on since 1994. It took the Government a number of years before it started cracking down on illegal cottages.

A legal precedent was set in terms of the enforcing Section 39 of Decree 9 in December 2005 when demolition orders were granted by Transkei High Court judge Selwyn Miller to the Eastern Cape Dept of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism to demolish illegal cottages erected within the Coastal Conservation area of the Eastern Cape Coast, on the basis that permits had not been applied for nor issued for such cottages, and were therefore illegal.

According to the Mercury (2007) more than 40 cottages have been destroyed since 2003, when the Eastern Cape Department of Environmental Affairs embarked on a project to prevent illegal development on this section of the coastline.

5.3 Titanium Mining in Xolobeni

The issue of proposed mining has been talked about for many years in the Wild Coast. Since 2001 there have been talks to mine titanium at Wavecrest along the Wild Coast. Furthermore, there have been conflicts also over the mining of sand dunes at the Xolobeni community. The Xolobeni Mineral Sands Project is a major heavy mineral sands deposit of an estimated 346 million tones at 5.0% heavy mineral located in Pondoland on the South African Wild Coast. The mining lease area extends continuously along the coast for some 22km from the Mzamba River in the north to the Mtentu River on the southern boundary and covers an area of some 3300 ha. The heavy mineral sand deposits are contained within 5 blocks, each named after the river at its southern boundary - Mtentu, Sikombe, Kwanyana, Mnyameni and Mphalane – the seaward boundaries of which are located 50m inland of the frontal dunes.

According to SRK Consulting (2003), the pre-feasibility work by the mining proponents demonstrates a 22-year life of mine for a US$200 million capital development including the construction of a mineral separation plant (MSP) and smelter.

The affected land is owned by the State and held in Trust for the local people. The land is occupied by local communities as communal land, managed by both tribal authority and local government. The State has assumed nominal jurisdiction over the communal land until the Communal Land Rights Act (CLaRA) is enacted.

Further revelations included information that the mining company was raising local expectations unrealistically by promising jobs and complete rehabilitation of the dunes. A previous report, completed twelve years earlier by Richards Bay Minerals, stated that they declined to mine for two reasons: firstly that the mining would be unviable without a road; and secondly that the dunes were unrehabilitable and also that local people's land will have to be taken for this to be feasible. However, some entries, among thousands have indicated that they support the mining project, as it will bring a good toll road to their area. Even support from the rural community is qualified. The only positive aspect, they say, is that both the mining project and the road might bring jobs in the short -term and that there will be some economic spin-offs from the project.

The Minister of Minerals and Energy Buyelwa Sonjica made comments in Parliament in 2008 which indicated that her department was in favour of the project and that she will consider issues of "national interest" when making up her mind to grant the mining right application for the Xolobeni sand project.

She told Parliament in answer to a written question circulated that she concluded the dune mining operation in Xolobeni was of national interest, and granting the right would substantially expand opportunities for the historically disadvantaged communities to benefit from exploitation of the mineral resources and would promote economic growth

On the other hand however, many rural residents have voiced concern about the long-term effects. They fear that the mining project and the road will bring crime, and that will in the long term compromise safety and access, that children and animals will be killed by speeding motorists, and that people working on the road will bring disease and moral decay, that the impact of the road and subsequent development will injure their fragile local economy. The Dispatch report (2008) indicated that the debate about mining project has torn the village of Xolobeni apart forcing many community members and their chief to flee fearing angry mobs that accuse them of supporting the mining project initiative. According to the Dispatch, neighbours who once lived in peace and harmony, no longer talked to each other because they belong to one of the two opposing factions- for or against the mining project.

Members of the community fear talking openly about the mining project as a result of the divisions. “You cannot even trust your own neighbour about this issue because you do not know which faction he belongs to,” said Thokozani Mthwa, a local resident in an interview with the Dispatch in August 2008. Following media publications and public protest on the matter, the Minister withdrew the mining license that was issued to MRC as many people felt that green tourism would bring more sustainable and longer benefits to the area than the mining project.

According to Kepe (2001), there is currently a debate that most development agencies and potential investors in the area plan to change the land use of the area to satisfy their short-term interests and that most of these initiatives are carried without integrated strategic vision that takes into account the benefits for the people of the Wild Coast.

5.4 The Construction of the proposed N2 Toll Road

National road networks link together the main cities and economic regions of a country and thus play an important developmental role in economic growth and social upliftment. National road networks are primarily designed to facilitate the

safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services over medium to long distances between economic centres. Trips are undertaken by private vehicles (commuter, business and recreational trips), public transport and commercial heavy vehicles to satisfy the needs and requirements of the unitary economic unit, i.e. the household, in a particular corridor, adjacent regions and the rest of the country. At a regional level, the provincial and local road networks provide the necessary linkages to the local communities thereby providing, with the national network, the required mobility to provide the basic ingredients for socio-economic growth.

The former Transkei, particularly the region between the Kei River and the Mtamvuna River is doubly handicapped in this respect. Not only does it currently have few economically realizable natural resources but the rugged and mountainous terrain has ensured that access is barely adequate at best and rudimentary at worst. The alignment of the existing N2, for instance, was determined in 1936 (the actual road was substantially completed by 1946) and has remained the only primary access to the area to date. The paved R61, which is the only other primary access, was only completed in the late 1970's and early to middle 1980's. There has been no improvement in provision of access since then. Secondary and local road networks are inadequate where they exist or are non-existent. The proposed N2 Wild Coast Toll Highway aims to provide an improved, shorter and safer road link between the Eastern Cape/Western Cape and KwaZulu-Natal. A shorter, more efficient transport route is viewed as an improvement to the national road network and is considered of strategic importance to the Wild Coast region, province and the country as a whole. It is considered that such a national road or "spine" would provide the necessary linkages and impetus to improve the secondary and local networks while facilitating sustainable economic growth along the entire Wild Coast corridor.

The Wild Coast has since been under siege from government through government's intention and plans to build this toll road that is likely to devastate the area. Most people believe that this proposed re-alignment of the N2 appears to be more about servicing the plans of an Australian mineral company, Mineral Resource Commodities Limited (MRC), which want to mine titanium.

The proposed new section that runs along the coast will slice 80kms off the current distance between the ports of Durban and East London. The completed road will be tolled along its length, with the majority of toll booths concentrated on the upper section between Southbroom and Durban. Most of the local residents interviewed feel that the fees on the new road might cost above what local people can afford those who would like to do business along the Wild Coast.

The construction of this toll road between East London and Port Shepstone will cut across sensitive endemism spots. Furthermore, the proposed route of the road will cut through the homesteads and the crop fields of local people whose livelihoods depend on subsistence agriculture and sell of sea foods to local lodges along the coast. Some local people having been opposing the road, claiming that it will affect their fragile local economy, based largely on agriculture and eco-tourism. Local communities also expressed concerns that they had not been adequately consulted or informed.

Of great interest to TRALSO as an organisation is the fact that the Provincial Land Claims Commissions for both Eastern Cape and KwaZulu Natal makes the point that several areas of land that are destined to have the road built on them are under land claims. The Commissions are busy working on the resolutions of settling of all rural claims and such a project will hamper their efforts of resolving of the restitution claims in the Wild Coast area should the construction of the road go ahead before the claims are settled. Some local residents in the area directly affected by the road claim that “our houses will be destroyed to build the road and there is no clear policy that developers have put in place to outline how compensation will be made.”

According to the Herald (2008) without local capacity building and planning for conservation and social development, which would require the framework of a regional development plan, one is tempted to conclude that the toll road would be a death warrant for the Pondoland Centre of Endemism, and that increasing environmental pressures would result in increased poverty amongst communities who are highly reliant on natural resources for their livelihoods. Other people feel that the construction of the toll road entirely conflicts with South Africa’s

environmental legislation, as well as international commitments under treaties such as the Convention on Biological Diversity.

5.5 Government's Spatial Development Initiatives

As earlier stated above, the Wild Coast region has been identified as an area for strategic economic development in accordance with government's Spatial Development Initiative (SDI) strategy. One focus of the SDI development programmes was community based tourism development. In simple terms it was tourism development for the benefit of communities not as beneficiaries but as major participants in tourism industry. The key strategy was to create an environment for community, public and private sector partnerships for sustainable tourism development. The challenge was to integrate rural development strategies and SDI development framework.

As indicated in the preceding sections, the Wild Coast is the subject of many conferences, symposiums and workshops since the proclamation of the SDI in 1996. To the extent that it failed to start with the strengths and aspirations of the local communities, the SDI could not survive. Many variants of the SDI emerged and vanished at a rate difficult to monitor. Over the past 10 years two impact assessments have been conducted for the N2 Toll Road and, while it seemed like a forgone conclusion that the consortium would be given a way ahead, TRALSO and many other stakeholders managed to air their concerns regarding land rights along the proposed corridor. The Department of Environmental Affairs has been pushing ahead with its proposal of an extended terrestrial nature and marine reserve. The land Trust in Dwesa-Cwebe has expressed its problems with the apparent intentions of the department to breach and possibly notate the co-management agreement in respect of the nature reserve. On the other hand, a development planning process has been taking place in respect of the Dwesa-Cwebe area under the auspices of the Amathole District Municipality. In 2003, a European Union funded programme for the development of hiking trails and other tourism facilities in the various SDI nodes was initiated but it has since collapsed under its own weight. A new initiative

dubbed, the "Wild Coast Conservation and Sustainable Development Project" involving a number of stakeholders and with substantial funding was replaced but it also ended without any substantial outcomes. TRALSO has in all its interventions prioritized its commitment to the community Trusts despite some attempts to follow and participate in some of these processes.

The challenge however, is that many of the current projects associated with the SDI have remained idle and in the planning phase for a long time now and very little impact has of date been made on the ground. Unemployment and poverty remain very real threats for the communities in the Wild Coast. However, infrastructure development projects have generated a series of short-term employment opportunities that are not sustainable. The impact of these development employment programmes has continued to be undermined by high retrenchment rates in mining and other industrial sector and as a result the unemployment rate continues to increase in spite of these efforts.

As indicated above, the Wild Coast SDI identified the provision of a major road, such as the proposed N2 toll road, as an important catalyst for achievement of its objectives since it would enhance access to the region and would facilitate development of the eco-tourism potential of the area. Kepe (2001) debates the main issues that have emerged since the introduction of the Special Development Initiatives (SDIs). According to Kepe (2001), the contrasting features of extreme poverty and natural beauty of the Wild Coast area were the main reasons why the area was declared a focal point for economic development. The beauty of the area presents an opportunity to encourage tourism related investments.

5.6 Power relations

The Local Municipalities and their involvement in the Wild Coast has also been an issue of concern not only to external potential investors but also those local communities. The Constitution of South Africa requires that Municipalities, consisting of elected representatives be established through out the country even in

the rural areas of the former Bantustans homelands where there is a stronghold of traditional leaders. The Municipalities are required to co-ordinate all economic development activities within their areas of jurisdiction. This therefore signifies the active participation of the communities in all development activities. The Wild Coast is covered by a total of five (5) local municipalities and three (3) District Municipalities that are all trying to implement their own development initiatives along the Wild Coast. Local media reports (Daily Dispatch 2008) have indicated how the general public in the Wild Coast have consistently been ignored in planning for such development initiatives by the local authorities.

The Xolobeni mining project is just one example. The paper reported how the Minister of Minerals and Energy (DME), Buyelwa Sonjica astonishly admitted how the consultation process in the planned multi-million rand titanium-mining project was flawed. The Minister had apparently expressed shock at the lack of consultation of the local people and the traditional authorities. According to the Daily Dispatch, community members have always expressed their concern regarding the dubious manner in which the DME seemed to have been pushing the awarding of the mineral rights to the Austrian Company. Most local people believed that the main players behind the project were politicians who were positioned to benefit to the disadvantage of the local communities.

In most cases, local government development plans and Municipal Integrated Development Plan (IDPs) are not always compatible with those of the local communities. There has been a concern that delegated national responsibilities through local government structures are not matched with local capacity to implement planned initiatives. Other notable institutional constraints include a lack of a cohesive planning framework, which integrates issues across sectors and complex land tenure. Training provided through other initiatives has not always improved livelihoods as a result of a lack of startup capacity. Tied to this are the transitional and transformation challenges that are at the coal face for development between the old and established system of traditional leadership and the new role they have to play within the new dispensation that seeks to incorporate them within local government as well as the implementation of CLaRA. This is fraught with its own dynamics as elected leaders such as councillors and the institutions of local

government in local and district municipalities fail to cope with the challenges and community dynamics on the ground.

5.7 The issue involving the Wild Coast Casino

The year 2008 will go in history as the year when Global giant hotel Sun International had a showdown with the aMaPondo monarchy over the renewal of its casino license for the Wild Coast casino. The king Pondombini Sigcau of the aMaPondo nation in the Wild Coast and the Sun International Group clashed over the King's request to the Eastern Cape Gambling Board to investigate the validity of a lease agreement signed between Sun International and the former Transkei homeland government almost 30 years ago. The call for the investigation emanated from the fact that the loyalties that were supposed to have been paid by the hotel group to the Qaukeni Trust of the amaPondo nation never materialised. The king further argued in the court papers that the R30, 000 (USD3000) was far too little and wondered how this annual amount would empower and improve the lot of the amaPondo nation. According to the notarial deed at the time of signing in 1979, Sun International obtained the land in a R30 000 per year lease agreement from the former Transkei government for a period of 50 years. The deal was mired in controversy over alleged bribes paid by hotel mogul Sol Kerzner to get exclusive gambling rights in the homeland. The deed was renewed in October 1992 with the option of another 50 years. According to the media reports, the king tried to get involved but was sidelined. Judgement in this case has been reserved at the time of writing this article.

6. Conclusion

In concluding this presentation, it is important to note that if the people of the Wild Coast have to overcome the current challenges and protect their territorial boundaries against any possible external "invasion" there are key issues that all

those interested in sustaining the Wild Coast need to consider in all their interventions. These include:

6.1 Active participation of the people

The notion of local development as a model of democratic decentralization is intended to produce superior outcomes in promoting equity, improving the quality of citizenship and producing better outcomes of state action. At the centre of this notion is the involvement of people not merely in making demands, but in playing an active role in decision-making that affects how to improve their lives and their community. A critical component of this participatuon is the recognition of the indigenous knowledge that people have in promoting their own livelihoods. Marginalisation of such knowledge undermines people's ability to direct their own development and enjoying their own space and freedom of expression.

6.2 Livelihood diversity

In order to produce superior outcomes of reducing poverty and sustaining the livelihoods of the people along the Wild Coast, there should be visible and clear strategies to promote a diversity of livelihoods for the people. Government, who happens to be the main actor in driving the various interventions, should ensure that there is an enabling environment that support all forms of livelihoods beyond remittances and social grants. These can be in form of seasonal jobs, household based agricultural production, etc.

6.3 Strategic collaboration and partnerships

As reported by the Herald in 2008, given the South African Environmental Outlook (SAEO) the current lack of capacity of many of the Eastern Cape's local authorities,

any positive sustainable outcome is exceedingly unlikely unless much greater management capacity and strategic collaboration in managing and sustaining the Wild Coast is developed amongst local authorities and stakeholders. This would require co-ordinated planning, budgeting for extra resources and implementation over many years by a number of national and provincial agencies and other key stakeholders. Public Private Partnerships interventions will need to promoted and enhanced in order to yield the needed results. Government has to consider a number of changes not only in administrative structures but also in allocation of functions, powers and control over resources among all those contesting in the Wild Coast (local municipalities, traditional leaders, potential private investors, communities, etc).

6.4 Information dissemination

Information is power and has proved to be a key factor in building of advanced communities. People living in the Wild Coast have remained skeptical of the various interventions because they lack information. When people are equipped with information that is useful they understand their challenges and plan for ways to mitigate such challenges more meaningfully. In addition, the flow of information helps communities to realise their weakness and potential in harnessing their social capital to overcome such weaknesses.

TRALSO's role over the last few years has becomes evident from the various participatory approaches that the organisation has been involved in. It is essentially a lobbying and network-building task and organise, the communities, then effectively activate the various processes and finally help ensure long-term sustainability by providing ongoing research and back-up and information, which effectively bridges the gaps on the information flow.

TRALSO in its new strategic direction will make it sure that people are aware of the 'bigger picture' and participate actively.

It remains critical that local forums and role players working with government (included) must work towards the broadening of local understanding of constraints and needs faced by Government actors in community-based natural resource management – the best way to do this would be to create genuinely interactive forums where government (and other NGO) officials outline their needs and expectations, but also where they get dramatic direct accounts of local needs, expectations and the impact of institutional failure in developing the Wild Coast.

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3

The Fight for Land Rights Versus Outsider's 'Appetites': Wild Coast Eco-Frontier Dynamics

Julien Dellier, Sylvain Guyot

Villager in Xolobeni (picture : J. Dellier, 2008)

1. Introduction

The South African Wild Coast is the coastline of the former Transkei (*figure 3.1)*, so called "independent homeland" during the apartheid era[4]. The most common

[4] The South African Wild Coast extends over 350km between the cities of East London in the South and Port Edward in the North. This littoral is bounded by the Great Kei River in the South and the Mtamvuna River in the North.

representations attached to this area are its natural beauty and the pride and resistance of the local people. Part of the colonial frontier, “buffer” territory between Xhosa and Zulu speaking areas during the XIXe century, the Wild Coast has always been a source of attraction and inspiration to settlers and travellers. The Wild Coast’s reputation of isolation is partly due to the fact that its coastline does not have any port. Access is only possible from a mountainous hinterland dotted with deep gorges. A subtropical humid climate without frost, beautiful sites combined with relatively good soils (plus rich underground resources) and good grazing lands makes these shores an attractive place to live, both for the local people established there for many centuries and for outsiders seeking exotic paradises. Consequently, the Wild Coast contains all the natural ingredients to be coveted by outsiders (Ashley, Ntshona, 2003; Butchart, 1989; Cousins, Kepe, 2004; Fabricius, Koch, Turner, Magoma, 2004; Guyot, 2009; Kepe, 2001; Le Roux, Nahman, 2005; WWF SA, 2005).

Nevertheless, geographical isolation, historical and political dynamics (*The Pondo Revolt*, Homeland politics) and tenacious white peoples’ perceptions of a "no-go" zone, did not stimulate strong colonisation and important European settlements in this region (Beinart, Hughes, 2007). For instance, white people who decided eventually to stay on the Wild Coast, like in Port St Johns (the main coastal town) or at the Wild Coast Sun Casino, while highly determined, were not numerous. Though, the White influence in homeland policies was also visible, through the creation of nature reserves (Dwesa Cebe, Mkambati established by the Transkei government in the 1980's, see Fabricius, Koch, Magome, 2001; Kepe, Cousins, Turner, 2001) in addition to the "white-elephant type" big seaport projects which remain unrealised dreams, supported in part by French companies.

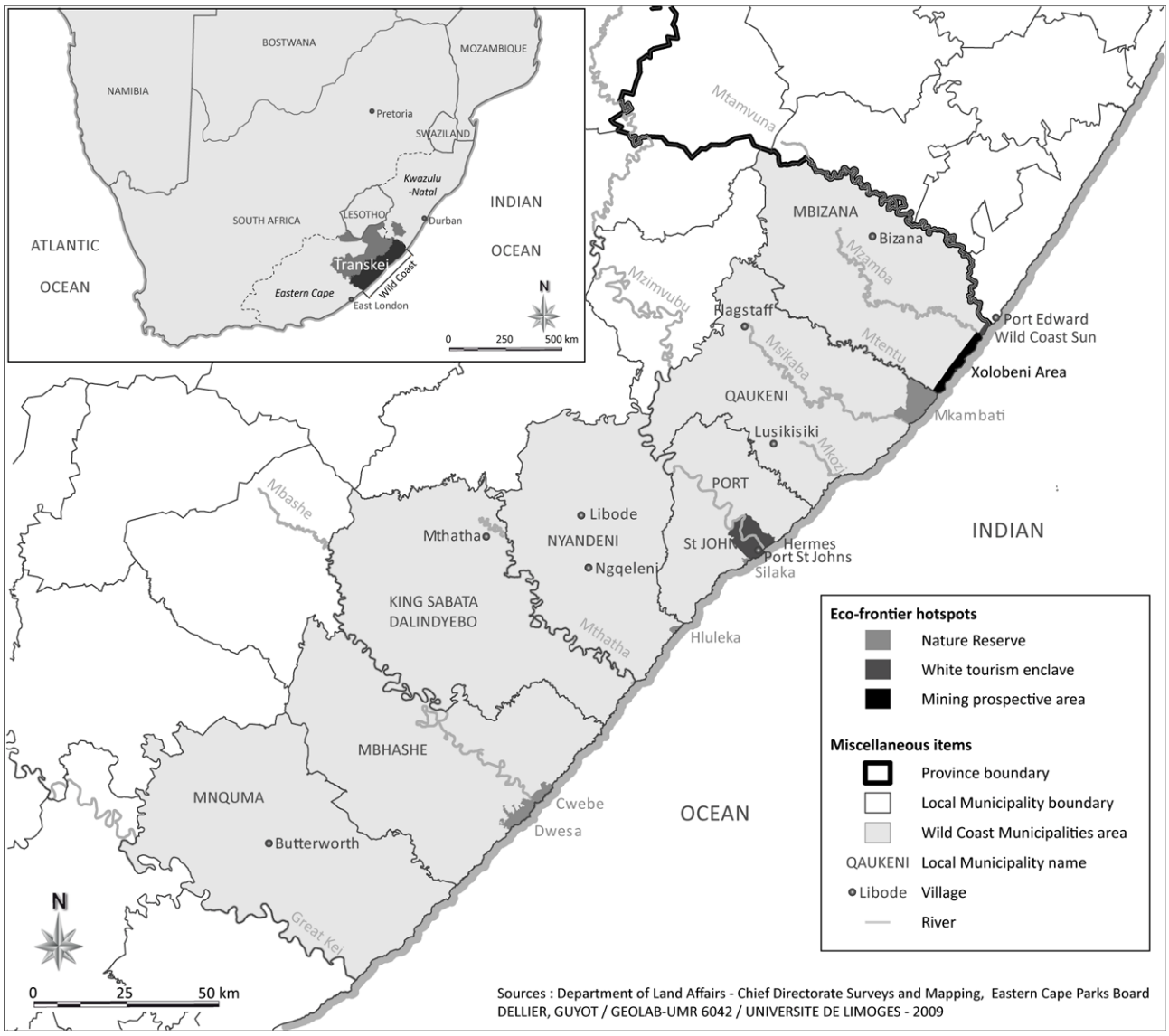

Figure 3.1 : location and hotspots of the Wild-Coast (Eastern Cape, South-Africa)

Yet, the fall of the apartheid regime made a change, and desires of re-appropriation and even re-occupation of the Wild Coast from outsiders started again through environmental motivations (new conservation projects, eco-tourism, seaside tourism etc.). So, whereas historically the colonisation efforts have not been completely successful, ecological appropriation offers now an opportunity for the settlers to take their "revenge" by accessing the territory. However, eco-frontier processes on the Wild Coast did not start with the fall of Transkei, because it is grounded in the past, as mentioned above. One can recognize the acceleration of the eco-frontier's processes in parallel to the territorial opening of this area to the world (Guyot, 2009). Such "eco-conquest" does not necessarily accommodate the needs and the will of the local populations who are developing various strategies of

acceptance and rejection (Guyot, 2009; Kepe, 2008). Rejection can follow legal lines, like the demolition of coastal "white" cottages (due to the 1km wide coastal protection stretch established by the former Transkei government), land claim processes (in Dwesa Cebe NR, Mkambati NR, Wild Coast Sun Casino or Port St Johns), or following illegal lines, with robbery and violent attacks made against eco-tourists. Acceptance can be seen through many projects associating local people and outsiders (EU-financed trails and eco-tourism projects, the tourism association at Port St Johns). Sometimes acceptance and rejection are the two sides of the same coin: e.g. the current conflict around mining prospects in the Xolobeni Area (Northern Wild Coast, Eastern Pondoland) that we will explain later in this text (Guyot, 2009).

The establishment of an eco-frontier on the Wild Coast is actually a long and evolving process which has followed different steps, rooted in space and time (Guyot, 2009). If the aesthetic dimension of the first colonial conquest of the coastal Transkei was not formally acknowledged as a central motivation by settlers, ecological appropriation had already a strong presence with fishing and hunting practices. More formalised processes of eco-frontierization started with the control of forest in the 1900's (see Kepe and Whande, Chapter 4, this volume), with the proclamation of Port St Johns and Wild Coast Sun Casino as coastal resorts during the 1960's and 1970's, with the creation of protected areas along the coast in the 1970's and 1980's, and materialised in the 2000's with all these current conflicting projects (Pondoland National Park, Eco-tourism, mining etc.; see Simukonda and Kraai, Chapter 2, this volume).

The aim of this paper is not to focus on the outsider dimension of the eco-frontier processes *per-se* (this work has been done elsewhere : Guyot, 2009) but to clarify all the local responses to outsider's appropriations, especially through land claims and land rights battles. In fact, land issues are a good catalyst of local resistance against outsiders' appetites.

From a spatial point of view, only places where field work[5] has been done by the authors between 2005 and 2009 will be addressed, located in Eastern Pondoland (between Port St Johns and Port Edward, *figure 3.1*). These places all show different phases of the eco-frontier processes. We will use the chronology of these post-apartheid land issues to structure this paper, from the oldest (Mkambati), to the most recent (Wild Coast Sun Casino, Port St Johns and Xolobeni). Diachronic comparisons will also be made.

The first part of this paper highlights the national context of land conflict resolution. The second part focuses on eco-frontiers processes on the Wild Coast. The third part is dedicated to the four case studies (Mkambati, Port St Johns, Wild Coast Sun, and Xolobeni). The fourth and concluding part deals with conflict resolution and future prospects.

2. National policies of land conflicts resolution

Since 1994, land issues have became at stake in South-African politics to reverse the apartheid legacy (Ramutsindela, 2003). A Land Reform programme, managed by the Department of Land Affairs, was developed to challenge this question. Restitution, Redistribution and Land Tenure are the three parts of it. Fifteen years later, this programme has failed to reach most of its goals and promises, and then crystallizes population dissatisfaction. The restitution and redistribution processes are working too slowly, and economic improvement for beneficiaries is not as developed as hoped (Lahiff, 2008). According to an official estimation, between 1994 and 2007,

[5] Various methods and sources of evidence were used to collect the data. Following Flowerdew and Martin (2005), Hoggart *et al.* (2002) and Limb and Dwyer (2001) qualitative methodologies were used during the principal research periods in September 2005, November 2007, April 2008, June 2009, and included participation observation (e.g., field observations in Pondoland in the Eastern Cape), interviews and the analysis of documentary materials. The empirical work comprised more than fifty, one-on-one personal, semi-structured, open-ended, in-depth interviews - with the interviewees chosen on the basis of the snowball technique. In an attempt to maximize polyvocality, the interviewees included various representatives from Land Commission, national and local politicians, stakeholders within the Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) sector, and residents. The information obtained via interviews, observations and meetings were supplemented with a comparative literature review of French- and English - speaking texts emanating from mainly geographers.

only five percent of land was redistributed when the target for 2014 is about 30 percent.

In the Eastern Cape province, where various communities lodged several land claims concerning province's nature reserves, the land claim commission is expected to complete this work by march 2008, or at this date only four were settled (Dwesa-Cwebe, Groot Uye, Mkambati and Silaka).

At the same time, the conflicts surrounding the recognition of traditional authorities in the rural areas of past homelands and the sharing of powers between traditional leaders and newly elected democratic representatives (wards councillor) are not really resolved (Ntsebeza, 1999). If the first wish of the African National Congress (ANC) was to restrict the influence of the traditional leaders in ex-Bantustans by a territorial complexification through the multiplication of the levels of decisions (Guyot, 2008), the last events show that the politics of the ANC have changed to become more amenable with traditional authorities. However, this restructuralisation complicates the adoption of new forms of power and representations by populations, notably in areas higly affected by a low average level of education. Indeed power games partly depend on the capacity of the traditional leaders to maintain an authority on the village community. The problem is then to know how and to whom to restore or redistribute the land in the rural areas of former Bantustans like the Transkei (Kepe, 1998 ; Vircoulon, 2003).

The land reform, due to its importance and in spite of dignified objectives, creates new forms of conflicts around the access to the land and to its resources. The land question in the countryside of the former Transkei introduces therefore a double stake, of land property and of citizens' representation, for the access of local populations to land ownership. But in the same time, the socio-economic instability and the fragility of these populations confronted with complex and multiples territorial changes make them vulnerable to outsiders' potential 'appetites'.

Within this framework, land reform in South Africa seems to provide numerous challenges for the development (or not) of a real democratic power at various scales (national to local). The case of the Wild Coast is relevant to study several types of

disturbances which can delay or stop this process—especially how different kinds of eco-frontiers are interacting with land issues in a former rural homeland context.

3. The Wild Coast, a dynamic eco-frontier marked by competition and conflicts

The South African Wild Coast is a relevant area to assess eco-frontier logics. Eco-frontier processes are rooted in history and evolve within time and space. Within that framework, conquest, dispute and change are the three main logics affecting successively or simultaneously the land in the four case studies *(table 3.1)*. In fact, different steps can be identified at different times in different places.

The Wild Coast offers various sections marked by different forms and relations to eco-frontiers *(figure 3.2)*, whose dynamic is changing through the course of time and political contexts. Furthermore, local reaction to eco-frontier logics is also variable.

Table n°3.1: Land conflicts studied

	Land of conquest			Land of disputes			Land of change	
	original coloni-sation phase	start and type of eco-frontier process	eco-frontier's evolution and transformation	main conflicts	resolution factors	freezing factors	current progress	future prospects
Mkambati NR	none	**[landscape]** 1920 Leper reserve installation	**[wilderness]** 1977, nature conservation [Transkei Homeland, White influence] Mkambati	effective co-management of Mkambati NR	-Operational co-management committee - ecotourism potential development	- lack of confidence between ECP and trust members - lack of representativeness of villagers within the trust - crucial economic needs for the community - lack of economic subsides redistribution to the community in a short time period.	- slow development of other functions around nature reserve which could help the community to generate income.	2 scenarii : - enhanced development of ecotourism and sustainable use of ressources by the community with the help of ECP - failure of ecotourism development and/or lack of economic subsidies provided to the community by reserve management, crystallization of tension between community and ECP on ressource use, risk for sustainability
Port St Johns	1878, military camp, Fort Harrison,	**[landscape]** First hotel 1890 (Needles) Balneary resort 1960's	**[wilderness]** 1980's, nature conservation [Transkei Homeland, White influence] Silaka Hluleka Post-apartheid: eco-tourism	land claim covering town center, military base and Silaka NR	- tourism potential - crucial economic needs for the Caguba community	- corrupted municipality - strong permanent White (eco)settlement - lack of consultation and misunderstandings - strong local voices (both political and civil society) - divided community due to regional land claim commission strategy.	- controversial land claim settlement - internal tensions between the community - uncertainties linked to tourism development	3 scenarii : - winning municipal development strategy benefiting to the whole population (thanks to land claim settlement) - reinforcement of eco-settlers and outsiders' appropriations (eco-tourism and residences) - failure of current development
Wild Coast Sun	**none**	**[landscape]** 1979, Wild Coast Sun construction (Holiday resort, tourism enclave in former bantustan)	None	land claim covering Wild Coast Sun area	- tourism potential - links between Amadiba community and Eco-settlers	- divided community between Mbizana and Kimbili trust - claimants strongly want land restitution first - eco-settlers rejection of negociation on land issues - economic stakes - develoment plans from claimants/eco-settlers on unused lands	- no land claim settlement - internal tensions between the community - negotiations are at a standstill	4 scenarii : - land claim settlement based on co-development of ressort by the local community, Sun International and other outsiders' investors - land claim settlement based on co-development of resort by the local community and Sun International as the only outsider - land claim settlement resulting in Sun International leaving and arrival of new outsiders investors - land claim settlement resulting in Sun International leaving and the failure of the resort causes the lack of new outside investors
Xolobeni	**none**	**[wilderness]** post-apartheid development of eco-tourism trails (UE project)	Towards **[extractive]** Mining exploration: heavy minerals (titanium) risk of expropriation for local people	Eco-tourism versus mining versus land rights	- high level of mediatisation - agriculture as alternative - decrease of titanium prices - proximity of tourism areas (Mkambati and Wild Coast Sun)	- united environmentalists front through "Sustaining the Wild Coast" (NGO's network) with few local connections opposed to a strong mining alliance grounded in BEE projects - divided local communities - divided political responses at local, provincial and national levels. - instrumentalisation of boundaries (municipal wards versus traditional wards) - controversial strategy used by mining company (corruption…)	- no decision taken at the moment - internal tensions between the community	3 scenarii : -Mining exploitation approved, strong environmental consequences but about 500 job opportunities during 20 years. - Eco-tourism preferred to mining, less job opportunities but more sustainable ones. Can become a law case for the wild coast. - Failure of both projects due to non possibility of resolution, let area without chance of development and divided community to manage it

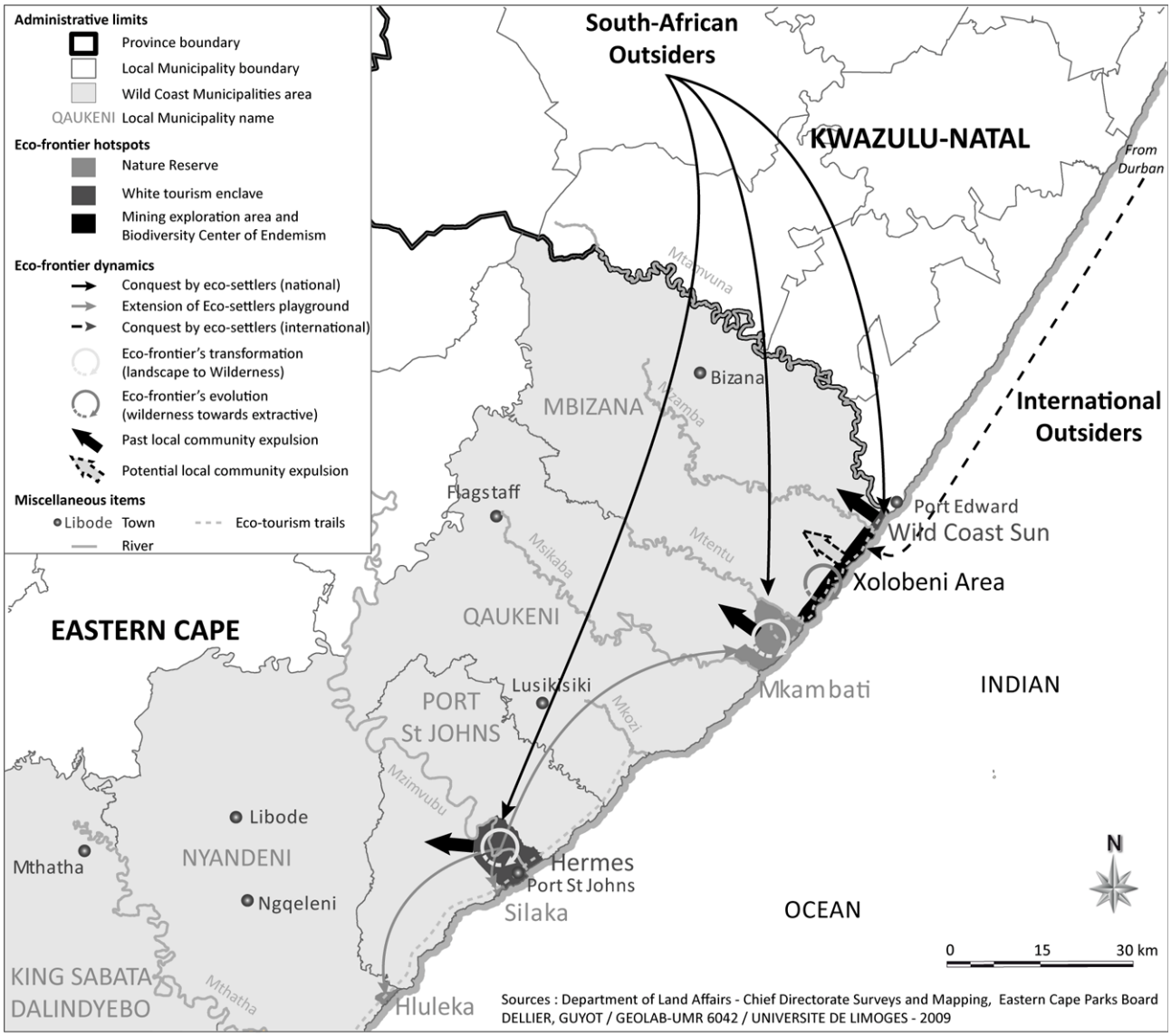

Figure 3.2 : Land of Conquest

3.1 Evidence of eco-frontier dynamics on the Wild Coast

Evidence of eco-frontiers dynamics on the Wild Coast can be divided into two categories: first the "obvious" evidence of eco-frontier development (history, settlements, conservation, trails etc.) and secondly the more "latent" or "potential" logics (current plans and projects, remote controlling etc.). We assume that the latter category, in spite of its virtual impact, is playing an important role in the field, generating a lot of expectations and mass-media communication. Though, when one confronts the reality of the field and the number of narratives generated on the

Wild Coast, the contrast is significant. One can ask the question: where is the reality of “supposed changes”?

3.2 Embodiment criteria of an eco-frontier

To retain only a few pieces of relevant information, obvious evidence of eco-frontier processes on the Wild Coast can be read through, at least, four categories:

- historical data: e.g. building of the first “recreation” hotel (Needles) in Port St Johns around 1890; installation of an health “quarantine-type” eco-frontier in 1920 at Mkambati with the establishment of the Leper reserve etc.
- existing outsider’s settlements: construction of a mainly sea-side orientated resort in Port St Johns where hundreds of White eco-settlers still live today; casino and sea-side leisure resort in Wild Coast Sun (South of Port Edward); legal and illegal cottages on the coast etc.
- protected areas: very old protection of forests (for various uses) ; nature conservation: proclamation of the Mkambati Nature Reserve by Homeland government in 1977 and proclamation of other reserves to follow: Dwesa Cwebe (1978), Hluleka and Silaka and the Pondoland Marine Protected Area between Port Edward and Port St Johns in 2004.
- eco-tourism footprints: different networks of coastal trails operated from Wild Coast Sun, Port St Johns and Coffe Bay’s gateways.

Another set of evidence of eco-frontier processes needs to be added to that, one which is more related to projects, prospects and sometimes eco-phantasms driven from outside (remote-controlled).

Three main projects could be cited here as part of evidence of “renewable” eco-frontier processes.

- The elusive but historically grounded Pondoland National Park project

- The globalised labelling of the Wild Coast biodiversity: e.g. the biodiversity Hotspot of NGO "Conservation International".
- The environmental NGO networking (at both national and international levels) around eco-tourism versus the mining conflict on the Xolobeni area. Most of the eco-frontier logic is remote-controlled from big South African cities. What could be seen only as an "internet" fight, that could stay purely virtual, implies intense local consequences on stakeholder dynamics.

3.3 Causes justifying eco-frontier processes

To summarize briefly the main reasons justifying past and current eco-frontier processes on the Wild Coast, one must refer to a set of different parameters :

- physical parameters, such as a friendly, warmish climate, a beautiful landscape, a centre of endemism in terms of biodiversity (both land and oceanic) etc.
- geographical parameters, such as physical isolation (mountains, deep gorges, no ports), political marginalization (Homeland policies) and low population density.
- socio-economic parameters, such as chronic poverty with respect to Western models.
- pioneer-minded White people living in the neighbouring cities linked to a preservation-friendly inherited mentality.

3.4 Types and dynamic steps of eco-frontiers

To refer directly to basic categories of eco-frontiers described by Guyot (2009), all of the landscape, wilderness and extractive types exist on the Wild Coast. However they need to be detailed.

Historically, the landscape category is spatially very localised. Before the end of the apartheid era, at Port St Johns and at Wild Coast Sun, the eco-frontier was not very expanded and rather coincided with the gateway itself. That confirms these places as logical areas to initiate and pursue other eco-frontier processes. Moreover, other categories of eco-frontiers are starting from these gateways, e.g. a wilderness type with the eco-tourism conquest of Xolobeni (with Wild Coast Sun as gateway) or in the project of Pondo Park, with Port St Johns described as the Southern main entrance of the park.

Wilderness categories are attached to conservation initiatives like in the Mkambati Nature Reserve and other reserves. Isolated eco-settlers houses or eco-refuges can also fall within this category following then a "preservationist philosophy".

The extractive category is obviously linked to the mineral deposits in Xolobeni Area and fights against a wilderness approach (eco-tourism trails).

Spatial and time dynamics of eco-frontiers are important to highlight. By definition eco-frontiers are not stable[6]. This instability could imply different results.

- An instable eco-frontier can be perpetuated as non-definitive spatial object forever, especially if none of the stakeholders is really winning its task.
- An instable eco-frontier can be consolidated as a functional spatial object, a new spatial category like a sea-side resort, in the case of Port St Johns
- An instable eco-frontier can lead to a weak spatial identity like in the Xolobeni area where eco-tourism projects did not yet deeply affect the landscape but modified some of the local social dimensions, especially the ones related to business and cash flow.

How are these eco-frontier logics are welcomed (or not) on the ground by local people? Like in many other eco-frontier environments in the world, the level of contestation is loud and many environmental and land conflicts are arising, but they

[6] We wonder whether places are always frontiers in one sense or another, and users of resources are always coming and going (albeit with different intensities). Important debate maybe.

are different according to place and historical context, like in the following four case studies.

4. Four "variations" on eco-frontiers and land conflicts

The first one is the case of Mkambati Nature Reserve, a protected natural area which was given back to the local community according to the land restitution program (Cousins, Kepe, 2004; Kepe, 1998; Kepe, Cousins, Turner, 2001; Kepe, 2008). Second is the case of the Caguba Land Claim concerning the Port St Johns's area and the Silaka Nature Reserve. Next is the Wild Coast Sun, a casino build in 1979 by Sun International Resort. The last one is the Xolobeni area, located between the Mkambati Nature Reserve and the Wild Coast Sun, where environmental issues deal against mining opportunities. These examples are significant of the actors and the temporality of eco-frontiers, but they are equally interesting to us as geographers because of their spatial concentration and their regional interdependence.

4.1 Separating land ownership and land management: preservation or spoliation in the case of the Mkambati nature reserve

In the Mkambati example we can see an evolution from a 'landscape' eco-frontier to a 'wilderness' eco-frontier during the XX century because the politics of the post-apartheid government legitimate and accentuate the spatial forms inherited from the first process of eco-frontierization. Moreover, the relationship between insiders and outsiders is not an equality-based one. In this area, land issues are officially solved by the settlement in 2004 of land claims lodged by several local communities in 1996. Since the beginning of the restitution process, some disputes arised to identify which communities can claim the land (Kepe, 1998). In 2008 ad 2009, our fieldwork revealed that the situation still remained unclear. Even if land ownership has been officially granted to the community, the question of land management is still conflictual.

Box n°3.1: Mkambati in space and time

With a surface of 7 720 hectares, the Mkambati Nature Reserve is the biggest and one of the most relevant protected areas of the Wild Coast. The Mkambati Nature Reserve is essentially constituted of open grassland (Butchart, 1989). This coastal area is bound by three "natural" borders : the Indian Ocean to the Eastern side, the Mtentu river to the North and the Msikaba river to the South *(figure 3.4)*. The Western boundary of the reserve is separated from the rest of the region by a barbed-wire fence.

In 1899, an area of 17 400 hectares bounded by the Mtentu River to the North and the Msikaba River to the South, is allocated as a *Leper Reserve*. This new status refers to an agreement between Paramount Chief Sigcawu and the Assistant Chief Magistrate of Lusikisiki, despite the fact that some Khanyayo people lived on this grazing area. In 1920, these people were forced to move, and in 1922 the reserve was formally created. The creation of the reserve marks the first stage of "health" eco-fronterisation in the Mkambati area. Since this date, the limits of the reserve and the use of the resources have become a bone of contention both between local communities and outsiders but also within the local community. For example, a wide area included in the Leper Reserve was used for grazing to provide food for the lepers which was not clearly established in the agreement (Kepe, 1998). As a results of this dispute, in 1961 the area of the reserve was reduced to 12 000 hectares, and the local community was once again allowed to use the 5 400 hectares for grazing.

In 1976, the hospital closed and the Mkambati area was divided in two parts. The coastal part become a nature reserve in 1977. At the beginning, the management of this area was shared between private societies (for hunting purpose) and the Transkei Government. But this model did not work and it even caused environmental damage to the reserve. Finally, in 1982, the Transkei Government decided to manage the area on its own without any help from outsiders, maintaining uniquely nature conservation goals.

At the end of the apartheid, with the launch of land reform, the right to claim the land of the Mkambati Nature Reserve became a source of conflict between the various communities under the Thaweni Tribal Authority (Kepe, 1998). Finally, two claims have been lodged: the first one by the Khanyayo people who lived in the area before 1920, and a second one by the six other communities which composed the Thaweni Tribal Authority. At the same time, the Eastern Cape Tourism Board (ECTB) was mandated to manage the reserve.

Figure 3.3: View on the esturay of Msikaba river, Mkambati Nature Reserve (picture : J. Dellier, 2008)

The land claim was settled in 2004. The ex-Mkambati Leper Reserve area became the property of the Mkambati Land Trust. This trust is constituted of various stakeholders (e.g. Department of Agriculture, Department of Water Affairs and Forestry, Provincial Department of Economic Affairs, Environment and Tourism, O.R. Tambo District Municipality...) and local communities with a democratic representative system (in appearance). Under this system, for each village, a Communal Property Association was created, which sends two elected delegates to the Trust council. The main goal of the trust is to develop this area for the benefit of the communities. In practice, this system especially seems to benefit the elected members.

In 2005, the Eastern Cape Parks Board (ECPB) replaced the ECTB in management of the nature reserve. According to the land claim settlement, the Mkambati Nature

reserve must stay a protected area, but it is managed with a participative approach. Currently, this management is directed by the Mkambati Co-management Committee (CMC). This CMC is composed by two members of each of the seven communities, two members of the Land Trust and staff from Eastern Cape Parks Board, the Department of Land Affairs and the O.R. Tambo District Municipality. The CMC's aim is to promote a participative management of the nature reserve to reach conservation and community life improvement goals.

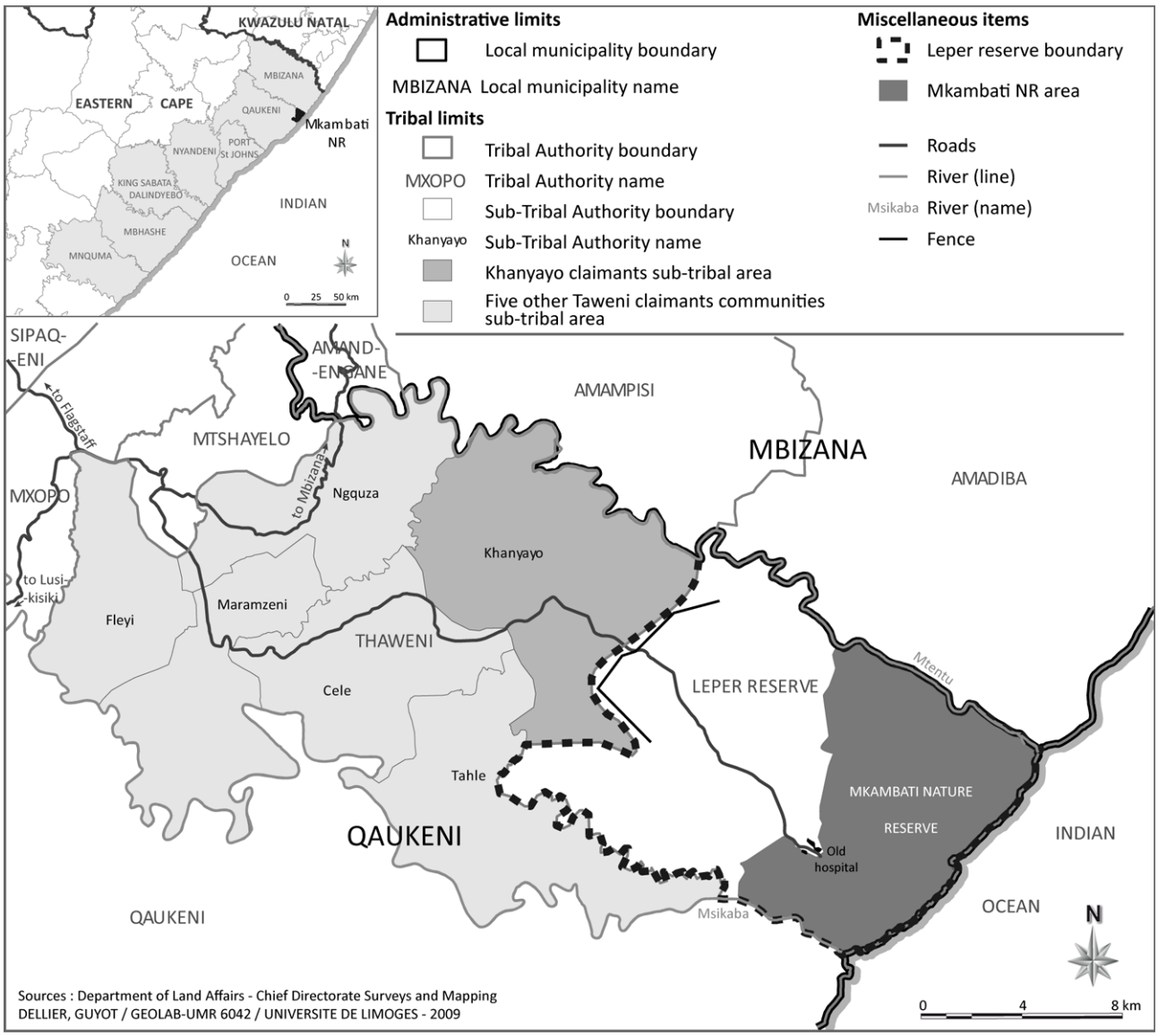

Figure 3.4 : The Mkambati Nature Reserve

Despite these changes and the resolution of the land claims, the situation in the field is still conflictual between the local communities and the provincial authorities and even within the community. Our field observations indicate that the internal

relationships of the CMC are dominated by a strong suspicion from the delegates of local communities regarding the will of ECPB to include "local people" in the management of the nature reserve. This tension results from various past and actual strategies carried out by ECPB and other provincial authorities to discredit the capacity of local people to participate in the management of the nature reserve in a sustainable way. However, in order to adress the problem of relationships with the community, ECPB has launched in 2009 the Community Outreach Officers program. It consists in the training of six members of various communities to improve the link between ECPB and the community living next to the nature reserve[7]. The Community Officer has two missions. Firstly, in a top-down logic, he must work for a better understanding and acceptance of conservation rules by the community members. Secondly, in a down-top logic, he is in charge of highlighting the main issues and needs of the local community.

Nevertheless, the background conditions for the success of this land restitution and co-management processes do not seem united (Kepe, 2008). In part, this lack of cohesion is due to the truncated negotiation of the main management strategy of the nature reserve which results in an unbalanced power between the various stakeholders. On the other hand, the efficient representativeness of the CPA is strongly criticized by the villagers and sometimes also by the local authorities.

The conservation ideology which is imposed here for the management of the nature reserve does not take into consideration the potential opportunity of traditional use of the land (local will to use of the environmental resources); rather, it addresses the issue only as a problem. Consequently, the resolution of the Mkambati land claim and the new management organisation of the nature reserve show the persistence of an "eco-settlers domination" (even if they are from Black provincial authorities) on the local people. Moreover, the slow development of eco-tourism in this area results as much from this disagreement as from the lack of financial resources. Regardless, the model of co-management which results in the settlement of the Mkambati land claim and the Dwesa-Cwebe land claim are still promoted by the

[7] The officers will be based in Coffee Bay, Dwesa, Hluleka, Mkhambati, Silaka and the last one ar the office of the Department of Water Affairs and Forestry in Port St Johns.

Regional Land Claim Commissioner and ECPB as examples to follow for the other land claims involving provincial nature reserves.

In Mkambati the land restitution process cannot really be seen as successful from the "local people's" point of view. The ownership of the land does not necessarily imply the recognition of land rights, and in fact, if the "local people" now have their title deeds, they exist only "on paper". The "eco-settlers" from ECPB justify this land rights alienation strategy based on conservation stakes, suggesting that the "local people" are not qualified to manage this territory, due to its nature reserve status.

4.2 The Black recovery of a White dominion? The Caguba land claim in Port St Johns and the Silaka nature reserve

Port St Johns was most likely the oldest White coastal enclave in the Wild-Coast. Indeed, since the end of the XVIII century, a continual presence of White settlements at the mouth of Umzimvubu river has been confirmed. In this example, we can see how a failed colonisation project has become a privileged gateway for eco-frontierization across history. Port St Johns is one of the most relevant potential eco-tourism areas on the Wild-Coast, notably with the immediate proximity of the Silaka Nature Reserve.

Box n°3.2: Port St Johns in space and time.

If before 1878 the estuary of the Umzimvubu river was punctually used for some trade with the Pondo, the real conquest of this piece of land began when an agreement was made between the colonial authority and Nqwiliso, the chief of the independent Pondo tribe living on the West side of the Umzimvubu river. A large piece of land, on the West side of the river, was ceded to the British. One month later, in August 1878, General Thesiger built a military camp named Fort Harrison to control the area. In 1884, Port St Johns was annexed to the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope. However, the expansion of Port St Johns was restrained by the lack of connection with the rest of the Transkei due to a hilly landscape. There is no railway which joins Port St Johns from the inland towns of Transkei, and the road from Umtata to Port St Johns was only tarred at the beginning of the 1990's.

The original project of colonisation failed because of the strong environmental constraints on the economic growth of Port St Johns; but the establishment of some White settlements and the attractiveness of the estuary's landscape bordered by two mountains (mount Thesiger and Sullivan) have enabled the development of the eco-frontier processes in a place which was seen as both unspoiled yet safe for the Whites. While the Needles Hotel appeared as early 1900, the tourism dynamic developed mainly during the 1950's and 1960's. During this period, in the White enclave named Hermes *(figure 3.6)*, several tourist resorts were built by White eco-settlers. This activity can be considered as a first phase of eco-frontierization based on the value of the 'landscape'. Furthermore, up until 1976, Port St Johns was governed as a White enclave and not as part of the Transkei, even in 1963 when Transkei became a Bantustan. Finally, in 1976, Port St Johns was ceded to Paramount Chief Kaizer Matanzima as part of a deal that would create an "independent" Transkei homeland. However, some White eco-settlers chose to stay in the area despite this change, and they have continued to promote Port St Johns as a remote eco-tourist destination, like famous writer and photographer John Costello.

Within the case of Port St Johns, there is another example of this process of eco-fronterization: the Silaka Nature Reserve, which is valued for its "wilderness". About 7km South-West of Port St Johns, during the 1960's, some Amatolo were removed from an area where a White farmer had begun to work by producing fruits and building cottages for tourist (as part of the landscape eco-frontierization process). In 1976, this land became vacant when another farmer, who occupied the land at the time, left at the moment of the Transkei "independence". The land was then used as a military base, and later in 1982, this area was reserved by the Transkei Department of Local Government and Land Tenure to become a nature reserve. The following year, two other pieces of land were added to this reserve. The same year, a specific management strategy was put in place, and as a result, in 1984, the whole area was fenced. From a conservation point of view, this small protected area (about 340 ha) is one of the most relevant examples of preserved coastal forest in the Transkei. The complex genesis of the Silaka Nature Reserve *(figure3.6)* results in a complicated background for the management of the protected area. In fact, the reserve has never been established as a wildlife or nature reserve, and the lands which composed Silaka belonged to several owners (the South African State, Port St Johns Municipality, Caguba Administrative). In 1987, the Caguba communities lodged a land claim for the return of their land, but there was no response from the provincial authority to this claim. Nearly 20 years later, since 2005, the Eastern Cape Parks Board have the responsibility of the management of the Reserve.

On the coastal part of the Port St Johns Municipality, two kinds of eco-frontiers are evolving. While the link between these two eco-frontiers (landscape and wilderness)

seems to be obvious in theory, it is not so clear in the field. Although tourism is identified as a priority for local economic development by the municipality through its Integrated Development Plan (IDP), there is no reference to the Silaka Nature Reserve. At the same time, the natural vegetation is recognized as being a major tourist attraction in the area. This lack of connection between the two may be explained by the different stakeholders at the origin of the two eco-frontiers. The landscape side of the eco-frontier is based mainly on White eco-settlers, whereas the wilderness aspect is established by a distant and now mostly black Provincial Authority.

Figure 3.5 : View of the Umzimvubu river estuary (left) and Port St Johns town center (right) (picture : J. Dellier, 2009)

In 1996, according to the land reform process, another land claim was lodged by the Caguba communities representing about 2260 claimant households. The claim included the central town of Port St Johns, the Silaka Nature Reserve, the former Transkei military base, Mount Thesiger Forest, the Airstrip, agricultural farms along the banks of Umzimvubu river and properties along the coast including a golf course, the abandoned Cape Hermes Hotel and the Mthumbane township. The global surface impacted by the claim is 3473,17ha.

This claim was highly criticised by White eco-settlers. At the possible restitution of the land, where the Whites had established tourist resorts, they pretended that Port St Johns, as part of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope, could not be reclaimed

under land restitution (interview with John Costello, owner of the B&B Outspan Inn). For the local Black municipality, the stakes were also to exclude developed lands from this restitution process and to keep or obtain the control of some pieces of unspoiled land for further development.

In February 2008, the land claim was settled. The settlement included the physical restoration of 2356,72 ha of the claimed land to the claimant community and a total financial compensation of 92 612 787 ZAR. However, 765,7 ha of land remained under the control of the municipality, including the town of Port St Johns and a part of the undeveloped area surrounding it (the golf course, the air strip and some other lands). This compromise responded to the local municipality's wishes.

This claim settlement was first rejected in December 2007 by the members of the Trust committee who requested a global land restitution instead of financial compensation. But one month later a meeting was held with other Caguba representative selected by the Land Claim Commission (as a CPA) and these representatives finally agreed to sign the document. This political manoeuvre was seen by Caguba's Trust leaders both as treason and as proof of corruption of the local and provincial authorities, information that in reality needs to be verified.

This incident marked the beginning of significant conflicts both within the Caguba communities and between Caguba communities and provincial and local authorities. The Caguba claimant leaders who refused to sign the agreement blame the Regional Land Claim Commission (RLCC) of collaborating with the local municipality. In response, the RLCC blame the original representatives for acting in their own interest and not representing the wishes of the claimants. The strategy used by the Local Municipality to obtain the control of some lands was also denounced by the claimants but justified by the RLCC.

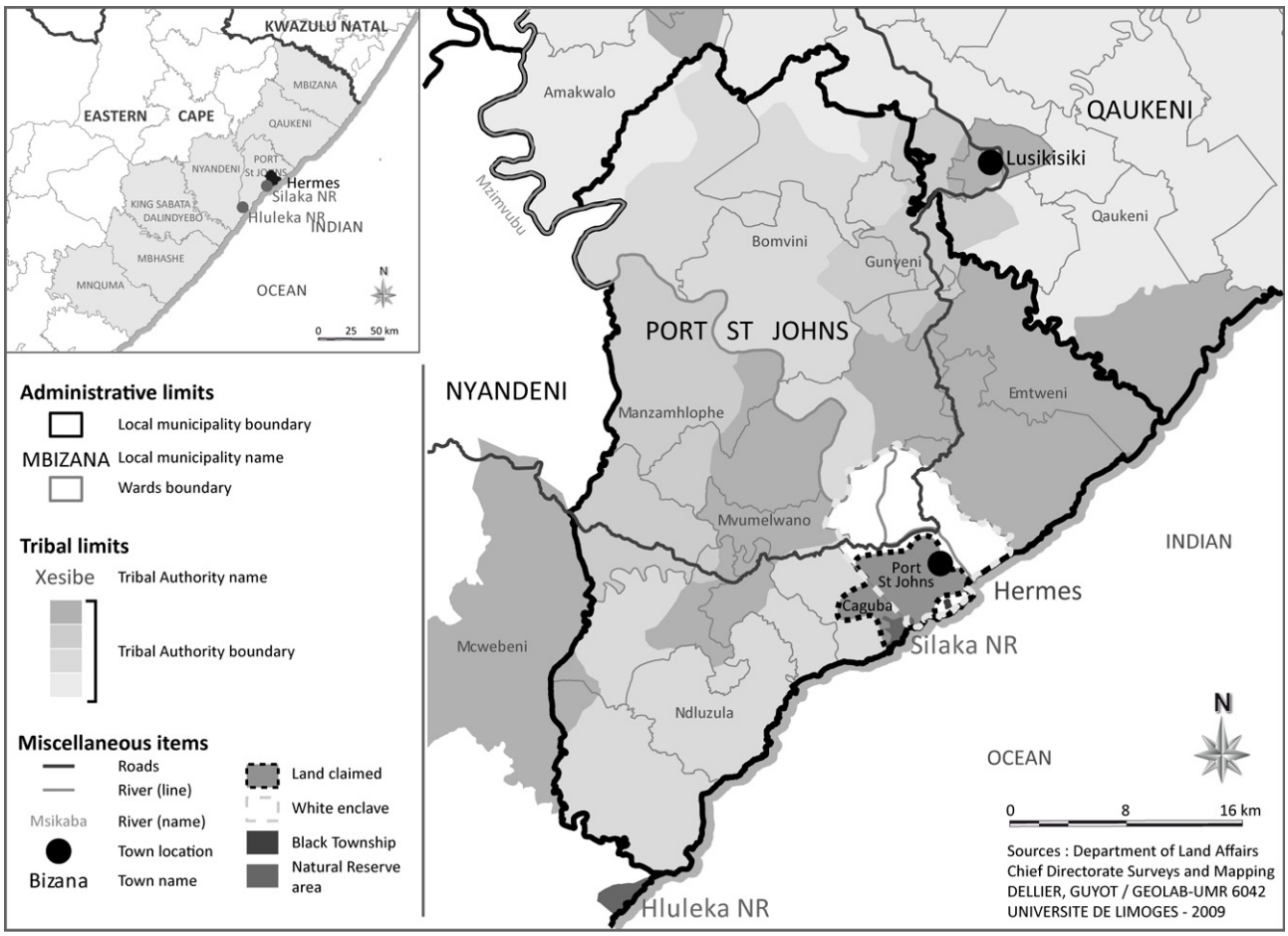

Figure 3.6 : The Caguba Land Claim in Port St Johns

In this case, the rashness of the RLCC to solve the land claim resulted in a territorial conflict and a strong feeling of injustice. The Caguba community is now divided and the relationship between the community and the municipality is compromised. Moreover, the stakes of the development of lands restored to the community has not been discussed, and furthermore, the community will not be supported or trained for that purpose. For example, in the case of the Silaka Nature Reserve, there was no meeting between the Eastern Cape Parks board and the claimants prior to the claim settlement. However, a cabinet memo dating from 2005 outlines the settlement of the land claims concerning protected areas. It indicates that the land is restored to the people in title, and the land remains a protected area, which results in the need for co-management of the land.

Figure 3.7 : View of the Silaka Nature Reserve (picture : J. Dellier, 2009)

In Port St Johns, the eco-settlers still have a strong influence, even indirect or "hidden", on the territory. The land claim settlement clearly shows that both landscape and wilderness eco-frontierization are still proceeding with the development of tourism and an ideology of conservation which does not consider the "local people" as shareholders but rather as a complication.

Consequently, the sustainable management of the Silaka Nature Reserve and the development of restored land which should benefit the community might collapse due to :

- the conflictual relationship between stakeholders
- and the lack of training for the community which would give them the capacity for developing their land

4.3 Place your bets! Compensating local past injustices vs. economic stakes : The land claim of the Wild Coast Sun Casino

The Wild Coast Sun installation in the ex bantustan of Transkei entirely corresponds to an outsider's conquest process of eco-frontier. The presence of a White enclave during the apartheid within the homeland era can be surprising. However, its existence is representative of the practices of certain White tycoons due to the opportunities given by these territories. If, on a political level, the end of the apartheid era signifies the end of this White enclave inside a Black area (due to the disappearance of Transkei Bantustan which is now inserted into the province of Eastern Cape), this evolution remains very difficult to characterize in the field. Fences are still here, and they continue to hinder exchanges and communication between local communities (the insiders) and the outsiders localised inside the enclave. On the contrary, within the Amadiba community, new borders are created regarding the management of the financial compensation generated by the Casino. The eco-frontier remains definitely strong around a wide part of this coastal area, which is still not used and remains potentially highly valuable for tourism purposes; for this reason, the land is contested.

Figure 3.8 : White side, the Wild Coast Sun and its garden (left)/Black side, the disused craft center after a fire (right) (picture : J. Dellier, 2008)

During the apartheid era, White investors from Sun International have negotiated with the Transkei government of the Matanzima brothers[8] for the lease of some land on the coast of Transkei, (only separated from the Kwazulu-Natal Province by the Mtamvuna river), to run a casino and tourism business *(figure 3.9)*. The construction of the Wild Coast Sun Casino began in 1979 and was completed in 1981. From 1978 to 1980, 103 households were forced to move from this area without any real compensation by the Matanzima *régime*. Before the casino, this area of 640 hectares held houses, grazing pastures and a banana farm. The families were moved from the area to a piece of land full of stones and disconnected from the grazing area for livestock. Furthermore, Sun international built a fence all along the area to prevent any intrusion on the part of the local people. Since this day, this place has became two separate areas with very little connections.

Thirty years later, the situation has not changed, apparently. Most of the 640 hectares are still unused, but they look like a vegetalised, non-natural buffer area between the holiday resort and the poor rural region. However, both the land and the businesses are concerned by the national programme for "Black and disadvantaged community life improvement".

Since 1994, the members of the Amadiba community that were forcibly removed at the time of the construction of the Wild Coast Sun have planned to lodge a land claim. This land claim was officially forwarded in 1996, represented by the Kimbili Land Trust which defends the interests of the claimants. Due to the slowness of the process, which is notably caused by the need of verification of the identity and the legitimacy of the numerous claimants, the tripartite negotiations aiming to solve the land claim between the Kimbili Land Trust, Sun International and the Land Claim Commission only began in 2003. The first strategy used by Sun International was to contest the validity of the land claim while taking refuge behind the lease agreement signed in 1979 with the authorities of the former Bantustan of Transkei. However, at the same time Sun International recognized a certain legitimacy of the claimants to ask for compensation for past injustices. For their part, the claimant

[8] Kaiser and George Mtanzima (Transkei National Independence Party) leads the Transkei former bantustan from 1976 to 1987

communities refute the agreement of 1979, suggesting that the community had not been consulted at this time. It was the starting point of rough negotiation.

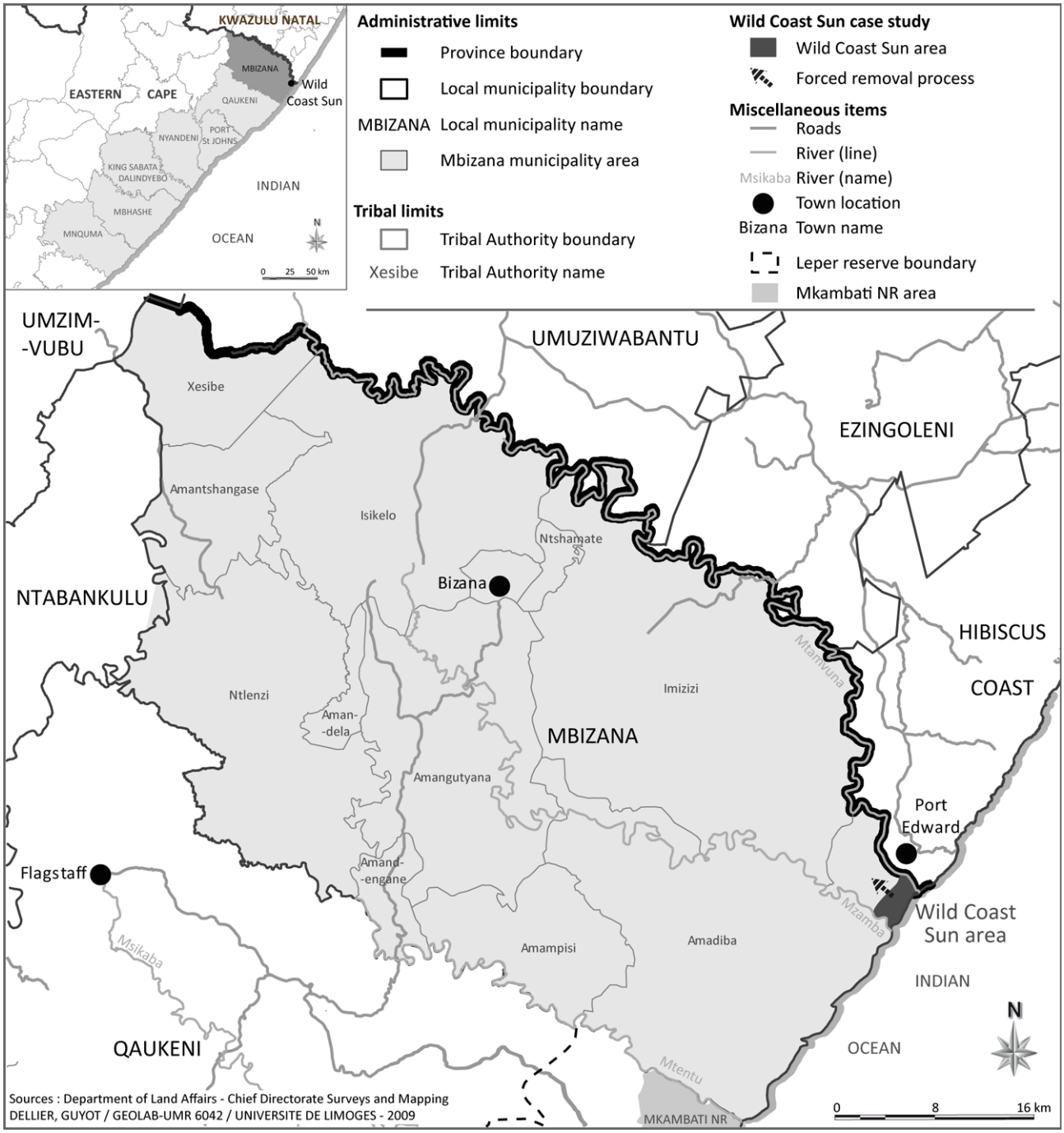

Figure 3.9 : The Wild Coast Sun in Mbizana

In ways similar to this process, the Mbizana Development Trust was created in 2004 during the establishment of Black Economic Empowerment politics initiated by National Government. The goal was to promote local communities as beneficiaries of the incomes generated by the casino, which was not the case before. The Trust

mission was to support the development of projects developed by the local communities by investing the funds procured by the participation in the casino resort. However, this national guideline seems to have failed in many cases, with the dissolution of the Trust following disputes inside communities or the inappropriate uses of funds raised. The Mbizana Development Trust became the owner of 30% of the shares of the Wild Coast Resort, which is actually its only source of funding. In terms of representation, the chairman of the Mbizana Trust sits on the board of directors of the establishment. The geographical area of action of the Trust covers the whole Mbizana Local Municipality. Therefore, it concerns a larger community than the few homes directly disrupted at the time of the installation of the Wild Coast Sun. The first factor of division was that the Mbizana Development Trust doesn't seem to carry any particular consideration for that part of the community dispossessed of their land by Sun International. No members of the Amadiba community directly involved in the expulsions are members of the board of the Mbizana Development Trust, which is problematic in terms of representativeness. This could explain the cleavage that has became more and more pronounced in the opposing positions defended by the two trusts from the beginning of the negotiations between the Kimbili Land Trust, Sun International and the Regional Land Claim Commission.

At this stage, the negotiations are at a deadlock and seem to be very weakly framed by the South-African government. Sun International tried twice to purchase the 640 hectares for sums of 1,5 then 7 millions Rands. But these two offers of compensation were refused by the claimants. Indeed this solution was offending not only their tradition but also their wish for a sustainable management of their land which meant that the land couldn't be sold and must be returned to the future generations. Following this setback, Sun International proposed to sell 10% of the shares of the Wild Coast Resort for 26 millions of Rands to the trust, an offer which has been refused once again by the claimants who reaffirmed their wish for a land restitution before starting all other negotiations. In order to overcome this obstacle, the government and the Land Claim Commission proposed to concentrate the negotiations exclusively on the land which had not yet been used, that is to say the major part of the 640 hectares in question. But this proposition has been rejected, as much by the claimants as by Sun International, for different reasons. The

difference is not only about the land ownership but also the opportunities of economic development. The proposition of Sun International is to include the claimants in its future extension projects while refusing all incursion of other outsiders at the moment, when the Kimbili Land Trust desires a new lease agreement with Sun International for the Wild Coast Sun. An additional benefit to the claimants would be to develop on the rest of the land new activities with other outside economic operators. Therefore, the signature of an agreement between the different stakeholders was not on its way in 2008.

The stakeholders concerned by these negotiations are however more numerous than the three mentioned above. Thus, the members of the Mbizana Trust are very attentive to maintaining the activities of the establishment (the largest local employer) which are providing funds to the trust. Therefore, the Mbizana Trust exercises a certain pressure on the Kimbili Land Trust to keep Sun International, with its experience of management of the site, as the only partner, thus playing the game of the international business facing local demands. The Mbizana Trust are reinforced in their attitude by the signature of an agreement between the Wild Coast Resort and the South African government guaranteeing that the possible shares assigned to the Kimbili Land Trust in the settlement of the land claim cannot be taken out of the 30% possessed by the Mbizana Development Trust[9].

The breathing room of the ongoing negotiations is consequently narrow between the risk of the increased divisions within the Amadiba community and seeing Sun International, the historic investor which is the best hope for maintaining activity in the resort, leave the Wild Coast.

The analysis of the processes at work show a transitional conflict between eco-frontierization and the fight for land rights on the part of the "local population". At this stage, if a conciliation between the two sides seems difficult to obtain, the power struggle manifested through the conflict is clearly unbalanced. The strategies used by the different stakeholders depend on their position in this power struggle. It

[9] The chairman of the Kimbili Trust requested that 10% of the 30% of the shares of the Wild Coast Resort possessed by the Mbizana Developement Trust be transferred to the Kimbili Land Trust in order to benefit directly the victims of the land expulsion.

also reveals the economic dimension as a central aspect within the stakeholders' interrelations. It is therefore possible to make a typology of the stakeholders according to their positioning on the land claim and in return their relation to the eco-frontier.

Box n°3.3 : Wild Coast Sun Land Claim, an interpretative stakeholder typology

Sun International is the initiator of this eco-frontier, and its strategy as an eco-settler is to preserve its control of the eco-frontier based on the landscape, while keeping an domineering role *vis à vis* the local community. With this aim, its attempts at a compromise must ensure that the company maintains and legitimises its conquest acquired during the apartheid era. The solution promoted was an *a minima* economic implication of the local community in the resort without reconsidering the land issue. Sun International also bets, with an involuntary but damaging support of the South-African State, on a weariness strategy. That is to say, at regular intervals, propositions of compromise for the land claim settlement are proposed to the claimants and to the Land Claim Commission by Sun International in terms that leave few doubts about its failure. This method, which entails an excessive drawing out of the length of the process, aims to force the claimants, which are in a critical economic situation, to accept a strictly financial indemnification in place of land restitution.The whole Amadiba community, represented by the Mbizana Development Trust, is taking position in favour of Sun International with the aim of protecting the value of their involvement in the Wild Coast Resort. The Mbizana Development Trust is then acting as an ally of the outsiders against the local population who is asking for compensation of past injustices. Additionally, the claimants are accused by the Mbizana Trust members of acting in their own interests and killing "the goose that laid the golden egg", which benefits the whole community.The role played by the Local Municipality of Mbizana in the genesis of these tensions is not neutral. In fact the Municipal Authority was responsible for a big part of the formation of the Mbizana Development Trust under its present board composition. The Municipal Authority has quickly understood the potential of this source of income for the development of the whole municipality. Therefore, the municipality has participated in the manipulation of the claimants' land rights in the name of the economic development of a BEE structure which involves all the communities of the Mbizana municipality.The South-African State is characterized in this case by its discretion. Although it acknowledged the validity of the land claim, the Regional Land Claim Commission, sometimes very active to determine land claim settlements, here remained strangely lifeless. This position can be seen as a non-neutral one. The lack of an authoritarian intervention to speed up the process is in part a kind of complicity with Sun International because the stagnation of the negotiations is favourable to the international group rather than to the local communities who are dealing with critical economic needs.The claimants from the Amadiba community

which are grouped within the Kimbili Land Trust estimate that they are victims of a double injustice :

- being deprived of their land for the construction of the Wild Coast Sun
- the lack of consideration from the BEE.

The isolation of this community opposite the other stakeholders is real, but it seems to reinforce their determination to obtain the land restitution. The wish of restoration of the land includes the will to develop and manage this land by themselves in the future. However, the Kimbili Trust has undertaken a conciliation strategy with Sun International as well as with the Mbizana Developement Trust.

In this example, we can observe that politics of compensation of past injustices and program of positive discrimination collide to lead conflicts not only between locals and outsiders, but also within the local community. These frictions, because they weaken the weight of the local demands, result in the reinforcement of the logic of enclavment which is part of the eco-frontier. At this stage, the development of the area remains under the domination of eco-settlers already present in the field.

The unbalanced power struggle between local and international stakeholders, the division of the local community around stakes generated by outsiders' appetites and their strategies are common features within the geographical area situated to the South of the Wild Coast Sun, on the other bank of the Mzamba River, the region of Xolobeni.

4.4 The eco-frontier of Xolobeni : land conflicts between "wilderness" and "extractive" appropriations

The Xolobeni example shows how two types of eco-frontierisation are battling to conquer the Northern coastal stretch of the Wild Coast: a "wilderness" process with the failed development of a national park and a declining eco-tourism project opposed to "extractive" processes by an Australian mining company due to the presence of ilmenite, zircon, rutile, and leucoxene in the coastal dunes). At the same time, the national government has a toll-road construction project that will

encroach the Xolobeni area. Both processes are impacting the local people, the AmaPondos, who are subsistence farmers.

The ecological value of the Xolobeni area is high because of its natural resources. This area is part of the Pondoland Centre of Endemism[10] and has many different species. The coastal landscape is magnificent and the beaches are largely unspoiled. In addition, the Xolobeni area contains heavy minerals in its dunes[11], which are very valuable since global prices for minerals have skyrocketed. This extractive plan involves relocating some villages and villagers inland and, in exchange, giving them jobs, services, and roads over a 25-year time frame (TEM, 2007).

Eco-tourism, through community-run trails and camps began in the area 10 years ago with the support of the European Union. Today, eco-tourism has collapsed, with fewer tourists, partially destroyed camps, and un-maintained trails. Reasons for this collapse are internal problems in the NGO that manages the tourism project (Pondocrop) and divisions between the inhabitants of the Xolobeni area. This is fomented by mining interests that are very keen to show their financial power and capacity to the villagers. Behind the orchestrated local group that opposes eco-tourism and pro-mining stakeholders, and which is motivated by various arguments like keeping the villages on site, a strong conflict is forming between outsiders. On the one side are the "wilderness" eco-settlers and on the other side are the "extractive" interests (Hilson, 2002). There are also many layers of politics involved.

[10] "The Pondoland centre of endemism is located in the Eastern Cape Province on the coast of the Indian Ocean of South Africa. The Pondoland Centre, as part of the Maputaland-Pondoland Region, has subsequently been acknowledged as one of the important centres of plant diversity and endemism in Africa. The area is the smallest of the 18 centres of endemism and boasts 1,800 plant species." Issued by: Sustaining the Wild Coast, www.swc.org.za, accessed 9th of April 2008.

[11] "The Xolobeni mineral lease area is the tenth-largest mineral sands resource in the world containing over nine-million tons of ilmenite. The project will be a dry mining operation as the area being mined is relatively small. Between 13-million tons and 15-million tons of minerals are expected to be mined a year. A previously conducted mining study has concluded that the Xolobeni mineral sands deposit is economically viable, with a mine life of some 22 years, producing some 250 000 t/y of ilmenite, 19 000 t/y of rutile, 15 000 t/y of zircon, and 15 000 t/y of leucoxene. Project outcomes are detailed by Transworld Energy & Minerals (TEM), a wholly owned subsidiary of Australian mining junior Mineral Commodities (MRC)" published by *Mining Weekly*, http://www.miningweekly.co.za/article.php?a_id=114711, accessed 9th of April 2008.

Box n°3.4 : Xolobeni in space and time

The Xolobeni area is a 22 km long coastal area along the Indian Ocean. Coastal boundaries of the area are well known *(figure 3.10 and 3.11)* :

- The North-East boundary is the Mzamba River; the closest development is the Wild Coast Sun Casino and the closest town is Port Edward (≈20 km) beyond the KwaZulu-Natal boundary.
- The South-West boundary is the Mtentu river; all territory South of Xolobeni is the Mkambati Nature Reserve, declared during the times of the Transkei Bantustan.
- The inland boundary of the Xolobeni area is unclear as the Xolobeni area falls within a larger region, the Amadiba Area, which is the name of the tribal authority. However, it seems that the coastal strip (3 km wide) is valued by both eco-tourism and mining. Coastal and hinterland spaces are ecologically and demographically very different.
- Finally, the maritime boundary can be seen from two perspectives: 1) An infinite view if one looks at the horizon from the Xolobeni hills[12] and 2) Defined limits if one considers the Pondoland Marine Protected Area[13], which lies along the Xolobeni coastline, and extends approximately 15 km out to sea (to the 1,000 m isobath). On the oceanic side of the Xolobeni coastline, wilderness exists, and subsistence fishing takes place there. On the landward side, there is a contrasting reality between wilderness pockets and agricultural and village land.

As a rural and undeveloped zone *(figures 3.10 and 3.11)*, the Xolobeni area has no more than 900 inhabitants in 2,866 ha within the proposed mining area (TEM, 2007). The population density is low (31 people/km²). Only 43 people of the 900 are formally employed. Most rely on subsistence farming. Generally, housing is simple, without running water or electricity, and poor sanitation facilities exist. Most of these local people are young children, school-aged children, housewives, elderly and pensioners. This area is very isolated. The roads are rudimentary (only 4X4 tracks). Mobile phone networks can be accessed only from the hilltops.

[12] This coast is inaccessible to boats. No ports are found along the Wild Coast, there are only launching sites for rescue services. This reinforces the notion of limits represented by the ocean.

[13] "The Pondoland Marine Protected Area will be one of South Africa's largest, and arguably its most spectacular. Including 90 km of coastline and extending approximately 15 km out to sea (to the 1,000 m isobath), it will cover 1,300 km^2. The extremely narrow continental shelf off Pondoland marks the start of the annual sardine run, which National Geographic has rated as the most exciting diving opportunity in the world. The development of tourism in this impoverished region is a priority, and the MPA is the first step in realising the potential of this scenic coastline." Issued by the Ministry of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (South Africa), 16 February 2004, http://www.search.gov.za accessed 9 April 2008.

Figure 3.10 : Rural landscape in the Xolobeni Area (picture : J. Dellier, 2008)

Wilderness mentors are one network of mainly environmental NGOs (Aubertin, 2005; Chartier, Ollitrault, 2005). One example is "Sustaining the Wild Coast" program, which replaced the former "Save the Wild Coast campaign" and was directed by Cathy Kay, a deep ecologist, who has now emigrated to the USA. The aim of this network is to promote sustainable development along the Wild Coast and especially in the Xolobeni Area. This means protecting the ecosystems and valuing it through eco-tourism for the benefit of the local people. Their first battle for the implementation of a national park, the Pondopark failed due to local government pressures on the national government after great unhappiness about the park was found at the grassroots level. However, not all locals are opposed to conservation (Ashley, Ntshona, 2003). Indeed, one of the members of this mainly White network is Black, from the Amadiba Area, and is a liaison with local guides and villagers. Even if this philanthropic, 'pro-poor tourism' and social attitude towards local people appears to be honest, one may ask about the hidden agenda of

this mainly White, metropolitan, green organisation. On the official website of "Sustaining the Wild Coast" (www.swc.org.za) many different NGOs have registered as part of the network: Bio Watch South Africa, Botanical Society of South Africa, Earthlike Africa, EWT (Endangered Wildlife Trust), IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare), EJNF (Environmental Justice Networking Forum), SAFCEI (South African Faith Communities Environment Institute), the Wilderness Foundation, WESSA (Wildlife Environmental Society of South Africa), and the WWF (World Wildlife Fund). The detailed analysis of this NGO's network is the aim of another publication (Guyot, 2009) and refers to previous work done on the subject, but we can draw some remarks from it here. These NGOs are part of four ideological and philosophical spheres in relation to the environment:

- The first is the "environmental justice" sphere, where ecological appropriations are made for the strict benefits of local people.
- The second is the "environmental capitalism" sphere, where environmental protection is made for economic profit, mainly to benefit large corporate groups (i.e., from the tourism sector and helped by industry), and only secondarily for local people.
- The third is the former "environmental racism" sphere, where nature conservation was directed against local people in the past and is now trying to recycle its messages through sustainable development, but still on an "animal first" basis for certain NGOs.
- The fourth is the spiritual and religious sphere, where "faith communities are committed to cherishing the living earth" (www.safcei.org.za). This sphere illustrates in a relevant manner the "spiritual" category of the eco-frontier.

Some NGOs of the "Sustaining the Wild Coast" network can be easily categorised into one of these four spheres:

- The ENJF or Bio Watch[14] is in the "environmental justice" sphere.
- The WWF[15] is in the "environmental capitalism" sphere.

[14] "Both rural offices work with small scale farmers on sustainable agriculture, food and seed security and farmers' rights." Issued by Bio Watch South Africa, http://www.biowatch.org.za/, accessed 9th of April 2008.

[15] "WWF South Africa was founded in 1968 by the late Dr. Anton Rupert and was then known as the Southern African Nature Foundation. Throughout the past 40 years, this national office of the leading global conservation organization is still committed to conserve the natural heritage of South Africa for future generations. WWF South Africa currently has 7 main programmes; Climate Change, Trade and Investment,

- The IFAW is in the "former environmental racism" sphere[16].
- The SAFCEI is in the "spiritual sphere." An Anglican bishop, Geoff Davies, is one of the pioneers of the Wild Coast protection campaign, in the name of ecology, but also in the name of God and his believers, which consist mainly of converted local people from the Wild Coast area.

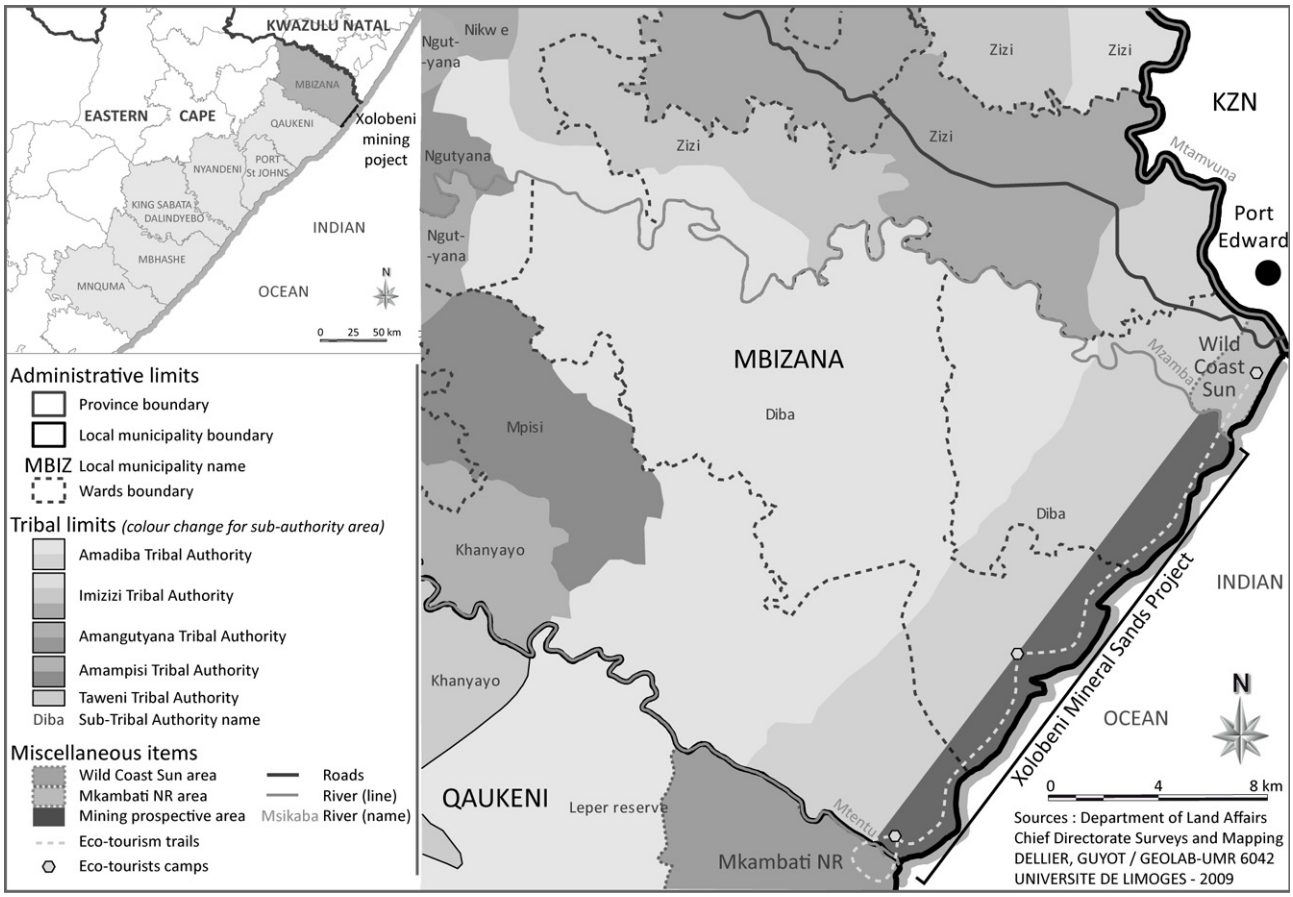

Figure 3.11 : the Xolobeni Area

Others NGOs in the network are not easily categorised because they cross different spheres due to their wide diversity of individuals with changing agendas. For instance, should we have classified WESSA according to Cathy Kay's thoughts, this

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Environmental Education, Species, Marine, Freshwater and the Ecosystems Partnership. We work with numerous partners including NGOs, industry and government to achieve our goal of people living in harmony with nature." Issued by WWF, http://www.wwf.org.za/?section=Landing_AboutUs_ZA, accessed 9th of April 2008.

[16] "Since 1985, IFAW has worked in Southern Africa to protect numerous species, including elephants, seals, whales, penguins and sharks. IFAW has also contributed significantly to habitat protection and emergency relief efforts in the region." Issued by IFAW, http://www.ifaw.org/ifaw/general/default.aspx?oid=17939, accessed 9th of April 2008.

organisation would have definitely fallen within the "former environmental racism category." Not all individuals within WESSA are conservative. The same is applicable for EWT, which has black activists, and for the Wilderness Foundation, which has quite a traditional conservationist past. One social worker from SWC summarised the situation well: "we have to deal with and compromise with diverse individuals who have all a special and respectable commitment for the Wild Coast" (interview with J. Clark, 20/10/2007).

The "extractive side" of this eco-frontier conflict is a group of various stakeholders representing mining interests with short-term views on profit making from local natural resources. The interesting thing here is that the main mining group[17] is an Australian-based company. The majority of the profit that will be made from the extraction is not going to stay in South Africa. On the other hand, the Xolobeni Empowerment Company (Pty) Ltd (XolCo) holds a 26% stake in the project. The Xolobeni Empowerment Company is a BEE (Black Economic Empowerment) company that represents the Xolobeni local people through a group of local registered stakeholder trusts. This BEE arrangement is used as an excuse for local stakeholders to join the 'extractive side' and fight eco-tourism projects. Most of local politicians from the ANC are now pro-mining. In 2006, they pressured the national government to stop the national park project handled by the Minister of Environment, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, who is a White person. In 2008, they lobby the minister of Minerals and Energy, Buyelwa Sonjica, to give the green light to the mining process. Politicians at both local and national levels must deliver jobs and services and the concretisation of mining project will create 550 jobs opportunities for approximately 20 years. If they cannot do it directly, their mission is to help the private sector to get it done. They want to use every resource from their territory to sustain their political control over the Xolobeni area. Nevertheless the local municipality mayor of Mbizana, Makhaya Twabu, changed his way of thinking in 2008 about this question when a delegation of Mbizana people travelled to Richard's Bays and saw the negative impact of mining.

"Sustaining the Wild Coast campaign" tries to point out the short-term views of the 'extractive side' and the irreparable damage their plans will cause to the ecology of

[17] Transworld Energy and Mineral Resources (SA) (Pty) Limited ("TEM")

the area. Even if this green NGO network is helped by traditional leaders and local farmers who do not want to lose their land, the Xolobeni Area mining frontier may soon become a reality, unless UNESCO is willing to proclaim the Xolobeni area a World Heritage Site. Nevertheless, the coastline South of Xolobeni is still pristine and may become the new playground for eco-settlers and eco-tourism developers; this is already the case North of Port St. Johns. Consequently, the eco-frontier is a dynamic space and is always translated elsewhere until the "last eco-frontier" is reached.

5.Perspectives

We detailed in the paper different types of land conflicts and eco-frontiers dynamics. Why is the level of resolution so variable from place to place? What are the future prospects? Three types of conflicts can by analysed in that part of the Wild Coast: conflict around Mkambati Nature Reserve co-management, land claims (Port St Johns and Wild Coast Sun) and land rights and land use conflicts: eco-tourism versus mining in Xolobeni. These three types are all linked to land issues and are organised according to a temporal logic "up-stream -> down-stream": The conflict at Xolobeni is the most up-stream one: what happens before the land which belongs to local people is going to be seized for other land-uses (eco-tourism or mining?); The conflict at Port St Johns and Wild Coast Sun is an intermediary one: what is the dynamic of a land claim process? The conflict at Mkambati is the most down–stream one: what happens after the settlement of a land claim?

The level of resolution of these conflicts is not necessarily linked to time but more to space. The higher the competition is, the lower the level of resolution appears to be. Moreover in places where eco-settlers are living permanently (Port St Johns, Wild Coast Sun), which are more business-orientated areas, compromises made with the use of financial compensation seem easier but not necessarily accepted by "local people". All the stakeholders play their own instruments, follow their own logic. Complications (especially around political issues: e.g. the drawing of municipal ward boundaries disturbing tribal demarcations) is organised to upset resolution processes.

Table 3.1 shows the different future prospects detailed in various scenarios. Five possibilities arise from that:

1- A franc eco-settlers victory having a strong social disturbance on local societies
2- A fragile compromise between nature orientated activities (conservation, eco-tourism etc.) and respect of land rights and uses
3- A franc eco-predators victory through mining and unsustainable industrialisation (e.g. mining, fishing resources)
4- A victory of local people's resistance and developing alternative ways of living
5- A perpetuation of eco-frontier instability profiting stakeholders with power and network connections.

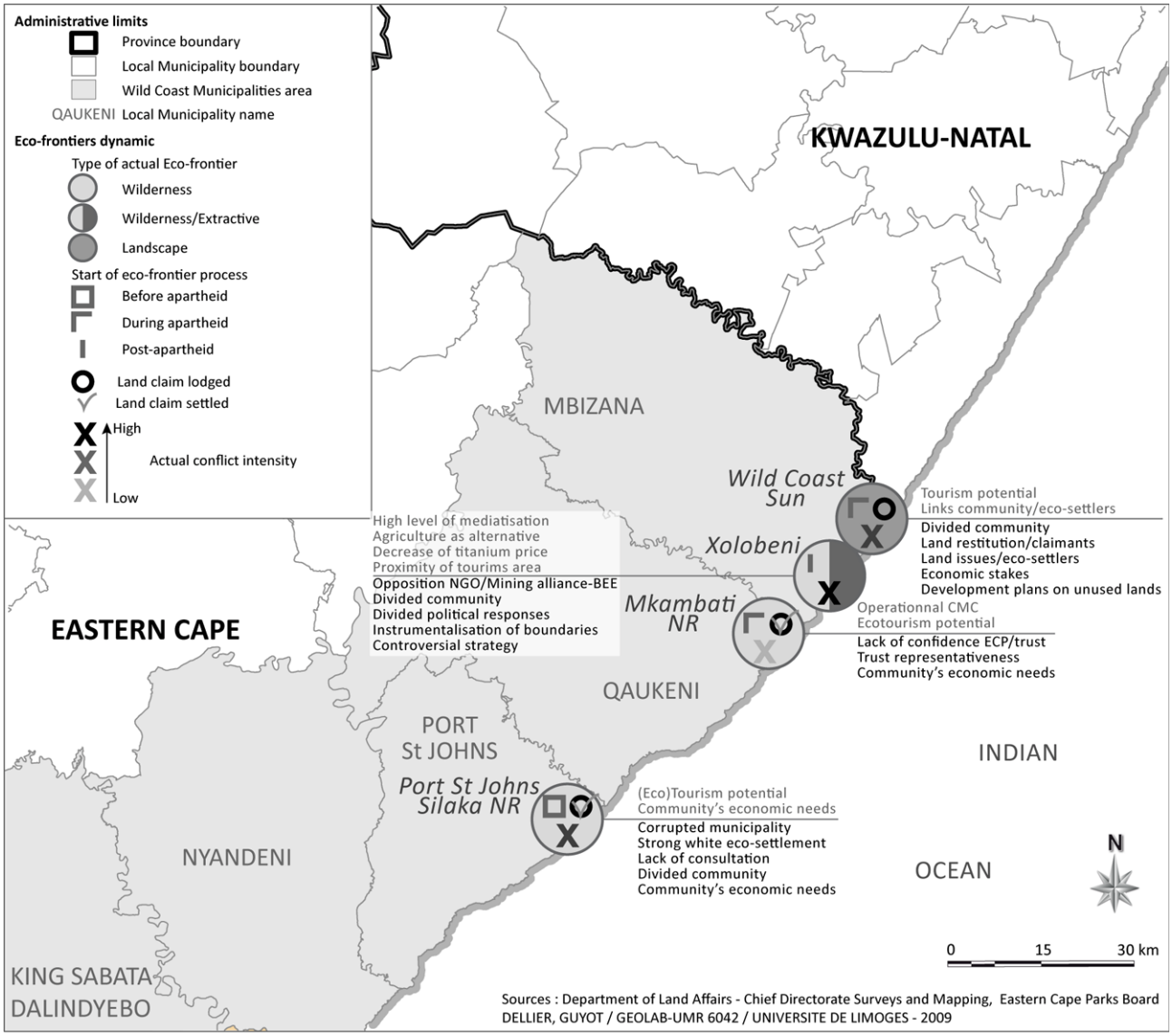

Figure 3.12 : Land of Dispute

In a near future, one of the main risks on the Wild-Coast seems to be the apparition of a global struggle between local communities and the outsiders regarding land issues. In this potential conflict, as a result of the strategies employed by the outsiders for many years, environmental stakes could be seen only as colonialism tools and for this reason it is being discredited by the "local people".

Our feeling is that there is now a strong need for a deep change in the approach from the national and provincial authorities on the land issue, at least regarding some points : Fighting past injustices should not mean creating new ones; The participation of "local people" must become more efficient, and not only be a marketing tool; Communities need some non-paternalistic training and support regarding the benefits of the land restored; Sustainable access to the resource in protected area must be allowed to the community.

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4

Ambiguous Spaces: Natural Resource Management Buffer Zones and Rural Livelihoods in Pondoland, South Africa

Thembela Kepe, Webster Whande

Swidden farming near Mkambati Nature Reserve (picture : J. Dellier, 2008)

1. Introduction

Biodiversity conservation is a prominent feature in environmental policies and legislation of many countries. This is because of the global concern that human activities are increasingly resulting in environmental degradation. Poor rural people, in particular, are often seen as both the agents and victims of environmental

degradation (Hoffman and Ashwell, 2001; de Villiers and Costello, 2006). It has thus been suggested that addressing environmental degradation without addressing issues of equity, social justice and people's poverty is counter-productive (Wynberg, 2002; Kepe and Cousins, 2002; Benjaminsen et al, 2006). For a long time, however, the goals of poverty alleviation and biodiversity conservation have been pursued separate from each. For most of the twentieth century, biodiversity conservation mainly took the form of fences-and-fines, where sections of the natural environment were protected from use by human beings. Research over the last few decades has shown that in the midst of poverty, not even fences-and-fines model of biodiversity conservation can maintain the integrity of these protected areas (see Hulme and Murphree, 2001; Barrow and Fabricius, 2002). Therefore, strategies that sought to conserve biodiversity, while at the same time attempting to meet the livelihood needs of the neighbouring people became the new focus.

Amongst several strategies that have been attempted to achieve this new goal has been the creation of buffer zones. Buffer zones are broadly defined as areas, often peripheral to a protected area, inside or outside, in which activities are implemented or the area managed with the aim of enhancing the positive and reducing the negative impacts of conservation on neighbouring communities and of neighbouring communities on conservation (Wild and Mutebi, 1996). While the concept of buffer zones has evolved over the years (see Wells and Brandon, 1993; Ebregt and De Greve, 2000; Martino, 2001), it has been argued that, besides being controversial in many cases, buffer zones remain poorly defined, particularly concerning the linkages between conservation and sustainable livelihoods (Salafsky and Wollenberg, 2000). It therefore follows that any attempt to use buffer zones to meet conservation and livelihood goals requires common understanding by all interested parties, of goals, plans and how success would be measured. Unfortunately, we argue, the need for this common understanding is often not seen as crucial by many policy makers, agencies and agents working in affected areas. It is also important to note at this stage that our use of the buffer zones concept in this chapter id deliberately loose, mainly to include many areas of both conservation and local livelihood value that are given either *de jure* or *de facto* 'buffer zone' status by the state or related agencies, but are not officially named buffer zones. Our motivation to classify such areas as *de facto* buffer zones has to do with clear and

deliberate exclusion of local people from use of, and benefit from, natural resources found in those particular zones.

While South Africa has a long history of biodiversity conservation, particularly through protected areas, since the late nineteenth century, successive administrations, including the post-apartheid ones, have not been able to successfully reconcile conservation, poverty reduction and land rights issues (Kepe et al, 2005; Benjaminsen et al, 2006). This is despite a publicized paradigm shift in conservation, which seeks to move away from strict conservation, but to make it more socially and politically justifiable by considering local people and the poverty they live under (Wynberg, 2002). Given that over half of South Africa's 47 million people live in poverty and that 70% of these live in rural areas (Aliber, 2003), it is important to seek a better understanding of how conservation and rural livelihoods interact in rural areas.

Through a case study of a cluster of protected areas in Pondoland, South Africa, this paper seeks to contribute to the debate concerning the linkages between conservation through buffer zones and the livelihoods of neighbouring rural people. We attempt to do this in two ways. First, we focus on how the manner in which a buffer zone is implemented can become a source of contestation between different interest groups; thus leading to difficulties in achieving the original goals of biodiversity conservation and improving people's livelihoods. Second, we explore the possibility that the lack of clarity on resource tenure rights, and therefore authority over land and natural resources within a buffer zone, is one of the key determinants of success or failure of the strategy. The paper is based on long-term research in the area, including local observations and interviews with local people over a ten-year period from 1996 to 2005 by one of the authors (Thembela Kepe). This was complemented by six weeks of additional local observations and interviews by (Webster Whande), between September 2002 and May 2003. Interviews with current and past government employees responsible for the area, as well as secondary material were used to provide background.

The chapter is divided into three sections. Following this introduction, the next section presents the Pondoland case, including the nature and history of buffer

zones in the area, and case studies of conflict in Ndengane village. The last section is the discussion and conclusion, where lessons for policy and research are drawn.

2. Pondoland Case

The case study area, Ndengane village, is situated in north-eastern Pondoland (31°13'–31°20'S and 29°55'–30°4'E), between two rivers, Msikaba and Magogo, in the Wild Coast. The area is inhabited by the people of the Khwetshube clan, who speak isiPondo. Ndengane village, headed by a sub-headman Mziwandile Phandela, is one of six villages within Lambasi Administrative Area that are under headman Mnumzana Gebuza. Since December 2000, Ndengane became part of Ward 22, within the Ingquza Hill local municipality, in the OR Tambo District Municipality. The settlement area is situated about three kilometers to the west of Msikaba protected state forest and Mkambati Nature Reserve, and about two kilometers from the coastline of Indian Ocean. The local people generate their livelihoods through a mixture of off-farm cash income sources that include formal and informal employment, remittances, state pensions, as well as small-scale local trading, and land-based sources that include arable and livestock farming and the collection of a range of natural resources. While the climate allows rainfed cropping, poor soil conditions limit extensive crop production, especially of the locally favoured maize.

Ndengane receives a mean annual rainfall of 1200 mm, with the bulk falling in summer. While the area is rated highly by botanists for its floristic diversity, it is largely sour grassland with small patches of subtropical, evergreen forest along river gorges or along the dune systems by the coast. However, as one gets closest to the coast grazing for livestock improves dramatically (Kepe and Scoones, 1999). In fact, the area close to the coast was historically reserved for winter grazing by the Pondo kings during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Beinart, 1982).

2.1 Deliberate or a Fluke? : Establishment of Buffer Zones in Ndengane

Protection of indigenous forests

Pondoland was one of the last territories in South Africa to be annexed by the British in 1894. This had significance for the whole of the Transkei because it heralded the posting of forest officers whose role was to introduce firmer colonial control over local resources (Tropp, 2003). Control over forest and other wildlife resources, which took the form of fines or imprisonment for infringement by local people was a reflection of the institutionalization of state forest 'reserves'. This had implications for local livelihood strategies, as activities such as hunting, cultivation on the fringes of the demarcated forests and gathering of fruits, even those clearly falling outside the protected area, were prohibited as well as being punishable offences (Tropp, 2003). By 1908, a total of 66 small coastal forests had been named and demarcated under state authority, as well as a range of other undemarcated forests where different sets of access and use were in place as provided for by the 1903 Proclamation No. 135 (Tropp, 2003; Beinart, 2003). Stringent use regulations within reserved state forests led to conflicts with local people and with the passing of the 1913 Union of South Africa Forest Act, these efforts had intensified providing for more wooded areas to be demarcated as state forests.

The passing of legislation to protect indigenous forests also meant the *de facto* introduction of buffer zones in the area. Firstly, with regard to the reserved forests, legislation stipulated that boundaries around these should be twenty yards (approximately 18 metres) from the edge of the forest (Beinart, 2003). These served as buffers between the villagers and the forests (King, 1941). However, these narrow buffers around the demarcated forests were not the only ones that affected local people. According to King (1941), early demarcation of important forests in the Transkei included sections of the communal grassland to provide grazing for government cattle that were being used for working in the forest. The inclusion of communal grasslands was also to ensure future afforestation. Thus, boundaries around forest reserves were blurred, making the implementation and enforcement of forest legislation necessarily challenging. In other words, while it was clear, though sometimes challenged by local people (Kepe, 1997), that government had

authority over these forest reserves; authority over the buffers that were created around these forests was ambiguous. This ambiguity, never the less, served government interests for nature conservation.

The Msikaba Forest, on the Msikaba mouth is one such demarcated forest. For decades villagers of Ndengane were restricted from using it to meet some of their livelihood needs, a practice that has continued to this day. Additionally, despite South Africa's comprehensive land reform programme, which, amongst many things, aims to clarify and secure local people's land rights, land in the vicinity of the Msikaba state forest remains state land and local villagers are uncertain what their rights to it are.

To further protect the reserved forest areas, the 1913 Forest Act made provisions for the demarcation of what was referred to as headman's forests. These were indigenous forests of lesser significance, where usufruct rights, excluding settlement, were bestowed on local people. By 1989, so called headman's forests constituted about 43% of all forests where some form of resource use control was exercised (Cooper & Swart, 1992). *Mnonweni* forest in Ndengane is just about the only headman's forest in the area, save for patches of a few trees each found in several riverines. As their name suggest, these forests were under the authority of village headmen, who regulated their use. However, for most of the twentieth century, headmen were themselves under the direct authority of the district magistrates. Nevertheless, these headmen's forests were also *de facto* buffers between local people and reserved forests. By giving some concessions around headmen's forests, the state was able to maintain the strictest form of to state forests. Yet there were still concerns about the depletion of forest resources within headman's forests, as demonstrated by Simmons, writing as the Forestry Inspector for Transkei/Natal:

> *"the undemarcated forests on native locations known as headman's forests should now certainly be closed to further cutting and tezzing in those districts that are amply served by Bunga and Departmental plantations…. It is disgraceful to think that these forests are being quickly*

exterminated and converted to mealie gardens when there is ample and suitable material close at hand in the plantations…"[18]

To further protect the demarcated and undemarcated forests from excessive use by villagers, the state introduced wattle and eucalyptus plantations in villages (Cooper and Swart, 1992). In other words, this served as a third *de facto* buffer against use of protected indigenous forests for rural livelihood purposes. As in the case of buffers created around forest reserves, as well as in the case of the headmen's forests, authority over these plantations remained blurred, in the sense that they were meant to be communal, but their limited sizes meant that conflicts over use were unavoidable. Thus all the buffer zones relating to the protection of indigenous forests were practically contested spaces and authority and rules concerning these were ambiguous.

Rehabilitation schemes in communal rangelands (Betterment planning)

Policies and legislation that sought to protect indigenous forests in the Transkei were not the only government measures that brought about buffer zones in Ndengane. Other measures introduced by the state, as a way of protecting the environment, involved measures to rehabilitate rangelands in communal areas. Historically, the Lambasi plains, part of which includes Ndengane village, have been used for winter grazing by the paramount chiefs of eastern Pondoland (Beinart, 1982). The 1894 annexation of Pondoland heralded the beginning of permanent settlement in the area, including livestock keeping and crop farming (Kepe, 2001).

Concerns for environmental degradation in the former homelands led to the passing of the 1939 Proclamation 31 that was premised on soil conservation through livestock and human settlements control (de Wet, 1995). It is estimated that in the whole of South Africa 4 million people were dispossessed of their land rights through betterment (Yawitch, 1981). Betterment planning was officially

[18] Cape Archives, FKS, Vol. 3/1/5

implemented from the 1940s, even though systematic removals of people for similar reasons had been on-going since the 1920s, as people were forcibly moved into demarcated residential zones, agriculture limited to arable and grazing lands (de Wet, 1995). The central objective of betterment was the transformation of rural settlement and land use in the African reserves (Beinart, 2002).

Even though Lambasi, including Ndengane, was declared a betterment area in 1949, earlier attempts to implement it first came in 1948. This attempt at implementing conservation measures along the coast amounted to government forcing people living closest to the coast in the Lambasi area to move further inland. Clearly, this attempt to move villagers further away from the coastline was another *de facto* implementation of a buffer zone, to protect the coastal forests (Msikaba and dune forests) and the coastline in general. However, continuing the tradition of resisting government intervention by the Pondo, especially of action that are seen to interfere with the way of life and livelihoods (see Beinart, 1982, Kepe, 2003), Ndengane people refused to move in 1948.

This initial resistance in 1948, however, did not discourage attempts by conservationists to push for the protection of the coastal vegetation. A senior agricultural officer, Miles Roberts, who was an avid nature lover, eagerly appreciated the traditional use of the Lambasi plains as a winter grazing site that he convinced paramount Chief Botha Sigcawu to allow a scientific survey to be done in Lambasi, as a way of paving way for conservation (Harrison, 1988). This scientific study was conducted from 1960-1963[19]. Resistance to the 1960s attempts to implement betterment planning were expressed[20] either through villagers delaying to follow removal orders or by mounting violent attacks on officials and those who supported the betterment idea in Lambasi (Harrison, 1988). Local history in Ndengane reveals that livestock owners, such as one powerful and respected Gxobela, were in the forefront of resistance against betterment planning. In general, the central point for Ndengane residents' refusal to be moved to another location therefore was the rich grazing pastures in the area and the threat the move posed for their access and use of this rangeland and marine resources on the coast. An

[19] Cape Town Archives, 1/LSK, Vol. 142

[20] Cape Town Archives, 1/LSK, Vol. 142

additional reason was that the alternative site was perceived by local people as not being fertile for cropping, and this would have been exacerbated by the fact that government was proposing to reduce the size of their fields as part of betterment. To emphasize their resistance, Ndengane people moved even closer to the coastline. In other words, the buffer zone, whether deliberate or a fluke, to protect coastal environmental resources failed to serve its purpose. However, despite their success in resisting betterment, local people remained uncertain about their land and resource rights on the land closest to the coast.

Transkei Coastal Development Control Plan

The third major state conservation initiative that attempted to bring about *de facto* buffer zone for the people of Ndengane came in the 1980s. This was in the form of the creation of a 1 000 metres zones on which any developments within that area had to be sanctioned by the government and a permit issued. According to the Coastal development plan (Transkei Government, 1982), later formalized as an Environmental Conservation Decree, 1992 (Decree No. 9 of 1992) of the Transkei (Military) Bantustan government:

> *"this plan does not attempt to provide a comprehensive regional strategy for the Transkeian coastal region; it is rather a strategy to prevent uncontrolled exploitation and degradation of the coast, and to promote coordination and harmonious development along the coast".*

Exploiting the ambiguity in this buffer zone policy proposed by the Transkei Bantustan government, the management at Msikaba Forest Reserve and campsite unilaterally extended the forest reserve along the coast, in the process taking over grazing lands from Ndengane residents. The result is conflict over the grazing areas within the "illegal" Msikaba Nature Reserve. Combining the 1000 metres zones and the Msikaba state forest, government officials unofficially called the area Msikaba Nature Reserve. Part of this unofficial reserve was fenced during the early 1990s, but this process was abandoned in the advent of a democratic South Africa in 1994. The effects were restrictions on local resource use and access. In certain instances,

people who were within what was now considered to be the boundaries of the Msikaba Nature Reserve were forcibly removed. While a vivid buffering of the forest and coastal areas, the new "nature reserve" never constituted an official declaration of a buffer zone. Yet its arbitrary set up had great consequences for Ndengane people's access to, and use of, land and other natural resources within its boundaries. Never the less, local people saw the abandonment of the fence after 1994 as yet another victory for their resistance efforts. Comments such as the following are thus common:

> *"We have won, we have won. Look at the fence, its down, nature (conservation department) has lost and we have our grazing land back"*
>
> *"*Sazifaka ngenkani iinkomo *(We had to force our way in and push cattle in the area). Even now we are still grazing in there despite nature's claims that we are not allowed to do anything"*

As the last comment shows, local people are still under the impression that their actions, such as grazing cattle in the buffer zone, are likely to be illegal in terms of state regulations. However, so long that their activities in this protected zone are about meeting their livelihood needs, they are prepared to "break the law".

2.2 Livelihoods, Conflict and Resistance in Ndengane: The Impact of state Intervention through Conservation.

Studies have shown that rural people's livelihoods are complex and dynamic (Chambers and Conway, 1992; Kepe, 1997). Rights and claims to resources and the resource base are also diverse and complex, thus understandings of resource tenure are complex and differentiated, but also subject to numerous interpretations (Peters, 1984; Kepe, 2001). Buffer zones, whether deliberate or a fluke, are also subject to these multiple use and users. In addition, and as indicated above, buffer zones in the case study area have also been subject to different understandings of

tenure rights. It is therefore important to understand, first, what the importance of resources found in the buffer zone is to local livelihoods.

Importance of livelihoods in the buffer area

In Ndengane land-based livelihood sources play a significant role as part of livelihood diversity. Kepe & Cousins (2002) identify six livelihood clusters in nearby Khanyayo village, including, not in any particular order of importance, migrant remittances, state welfare grants or pensions and agriculture; commuter employment; skilled labour; beer brewing and small groceries sales; kin dependency, together with piece jobs and trade in plant materials. With the exception of plant material trade, Ndengane's livelihoods are similar to those of Khanyayo. In Ndengane, in addition to the clusters identified above in sustaining rural livelihoods, collection of marine resources for domestic consumption and sale to visiting tourists is regarded as highly important (Whande, 2004a). The overwhelming scarcity of local and external employment in Ndengane makes natural resources use extremely important. This includes the collection of these for sale to other locals or outsiders.

If one uses these clusters to analyse livelihood strategies in Ndengane, they reveal the economic differentiation in the area, whereby the poorer households have limited means to access cash income and are regular collectors of marine resources, in addition to kin dependency and subsistence agriculture (Whande, 2004b). It is clear that land and other natural resources – marine resources, forests and grasslands – are critical for supporting the poorest residents' livelihoods and as safety nets against falling into poverty for the wealthier households. These resources have been at the centre of contestations among various people and organizations laying claims to the resources within the area, with local residents nostalgically recounting past uses as part of their narrative to lay claim to the resources (Whande, 2004a). Contestations have been high where local people's claims for use and access are threatened.

Conflicts and their impacts on local livelihoods

As shown in the previous section, many of the attempts by government agencies to assert authority over land and natural resources in Ndengane, through the creation of conservation buffer zones, have been met with strong resistance from the local people whose livelihoods involve significance use of these resources. Current land and resource conflicts in Ndengane should be viewed from a historical perspective and various attempts by the state to limit access to, and use of these resources. These conflicts can be analysed according to the following sectors: forestry, grasslands, land and marine resources. Various factors are identified here that pose a threat to Ndengane residents' livelihoods. These include uncertainties as a result of unclear tenure rights and the intricacies of balancing social and economic justice issues with biodiversity conservation.

First, conflicts over land have eroded local people's confidence to derive land-based livelihoods in a cloud of ambiguity and uncertainty after the attempted removals. Currently, the 1km stretch of land is under the authority of the provincial Department of Environmental, Economic Affairs and Tourism (DEEAT). Officials in the department agree that there is a lack of clarity as to which department has jurisdiction over this coastal strip of land since all land in the country is vested in the hands of the national ministry of land affairs. Whilst local residents in Ndengane can utilize the area for grazing purposes, any other resource use is met with penalties administered by the Mkambati Nature Reserve officials. These differentiated controls impact on the poorest households the most, as the richer ones tend to have livestock for grazing and the poorer more reliant on collection of a variety of natural resources for direct consumption.

At the time of undertaking research in the area, two people were arrested for collecting medicinal plants in the 1km zone, even as they had the permission of the sub-headman, which further highlights the contestation over authority. This is despite the fact that the 1982 Coastal development control plan, under whose authority the officials are prosecuting 'offenders', was only meant to give the department authority to demand that an environmental impact assessment be

undertaken before any major developments within this zone. Thus, the (mis) interpretation of the development plan has effectively led to the creation of a buffer zone where land and resource rights are fuzzy. Local people maintain that they have authority over land and natural resources in the 1km stretch of land. While policies and legislation in South Africa provide for possible restoration of land rights through restitution, conservation still enjoys priority in such areas. This uncertainty has implications on local people's livelihoods strategies.

The 1960s survey of Ndengane was followed by an attempt to move people to another site as part of betterment planning. Ndengane residents maintain they have seen people undertaking a similar survey and there are rumours that the area will be made into a national park for which local traditional leaders have agreed to. Headman Mnumzana Gebuza admits that he has gone to Ndengane with officials from the Wildlife and Environment Society of Southern Africa (WESSA) but only to discuss what other communities in the country have undertaken, by partnering in nature conservation and supporting their livelihoods through tourism. Residents of Ndengane are making connections between the survey undertaken in the 1960s, which eventually led to attempts to get them moved, and the current talks and surveys in the area that are linked to the Pondoland National Park. The bottom line is that the experiences of local people about the historical negative impacts of *de facto* buffer zones, their ambiguity in terms of authority over resources falling within them, inform current negative attitudes towards conservation land uses.

3. Conclusion

This chapter has shown that while buffer zone introduction is often presented as a clear conservation measure that is a win-win for both conservation agencies and the rural poor (Martino, 2001), they can also exist in practice, but not necessarily be backed by clear legislation. It is also clear from our discussion that whether they exist in law and or in practice, buffer zones tend to be ambiguous. To minimize the potential for negative impact of buffer zones on both biodiversity and rural livelihoods, we suggest that at least three things should be considered. Firstly, land and resource rights need to be clarified and secure for all stakeholders concerned,

including the state and local people. Secondly, local people's existing livelihood strategies need to be safeguarded as much as possible, so long that they are not a real threat to long-term biological sustainability of the environment. Thirdly, the introduction of conservation initiatives such as buffer zones need to be communicated, explained and agreed upon by all people concerned. If there is no agreement, or suspicions exist, the chances of failure increase.

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5

Subsistence Fishing among Indigenous People in the Eastern Cape's 'Wild Coast' in South Africa: The Case of Scambeni and Caguba Villages

Lizile Mniki

A fisherman at Second Beach, Silaka Nature Reserve (picture : J. Dellier, 2008)

1. Introduction

The management of natural resources is central in local economic development and for ensuring sustainable rural livelihoods in the newly democratizing South Africa. Institutional arrangements for sustainable management of these resources are now

seen as important at both the global arena and at different levels of government in South Africa. This paper focuses on the strategies the local stakeholders adopt in the face of what they see as increasing encroachment by the globalizing world, on the local natural resources, which constitute their heritage, on which their livelihoods have always depended through time. Using subsistence fishing in the 'Wild Coast' as a case, the study seeks to analyze the perspective of the local indigenous actors with regard to the hegemonic and other forces at play in the eco-frontier of the 'Wild Coast'.

The research has been conducted through a period of three years mainly through interviews and participant observation. The researcher has spent some days during this time visiting among the communities, attending community meetings, fishing and sometimes participating in the local territorial debates. Two traditional leaders, women, the youth, local ward councilors, local government officials, two non government organizations, and one white cottage dweller were interviewed through unstructured questionnaires. It was interesting that all the members of the village communities identified themselves as fishers, irrespective of how active they were in the fishing practice.

2. Study Area

Caguba and Scambeni villages are part of the broader Silaka area, which extends seven kilometers to Port St Johns town in the north east, from which they were forcefully removed, in their memories, during the 1930s and 1940s. At this time local participants indicate that the land now incorporated as the Silaka Nature Reserve was owned and occupied by the AmaTolo clan and the Mkhovu family. Their removal from this area was completed during the 1960s after a succession of acts of encroachment culminated in its occupation by a White farmer whom they call Lloyd, who built cottages to rent out to tourists. Efforts of resistance to subsequent occupation were often thwarted by discredited substitute traditional leaders, who at times would rule for short transitional periods before succession was effected. Members of the local community were adamant that they never acceded to the incorporation of their land into what is now the Silaka Game Reserve

because the traditional leader who acceded to it had not consulted them to obtain their consent.

Despite the efforts of the Minister of Agriculture to effect land restitution in Port St Johns (see Dellier and Guyot, Chapter 3, this volume), the matter of ownership of the area is far from settled, as evidenced by the bitterness, recriminations and court battles that have ensued after restitution had been done. The Minister has alluded to one assumption, which seems to guide her approach, that the land in dispute does not belong to the chiefs, in the traditional sense, but to the residents. This assumption led her to switch to a civic organization, the African National Organization aligned South African Civic Organization (SANCO) for a signature, when the local residents under their traditional structures proved to be non-compliant in the negotiations for the acceptance of financial compensation for the lost land. To make matters worse, local residents maintain that the process of financial compensation was fraught with inconsistency and, they believe, corruption. Some of the first recipients of financial compensation (who were the most ready to collect the money) were not valid claimants, as they only came to reside in Caguba and Scambeni long after the real residents had been removed from the town of Port St Johns and settled in the area. Hence the compensation money seemed to have run dry before all the valid claimants, had benefited. When it became apparent that the villagers were so divided as to threaten violent confrontation, the local leaders encouraged them all to accept the compensation but to continue the fight for their rights to land and natural resources. On the day the Minister came to launch the compensation process, a local journalist reported that she was greeted by a crowd part of which cried while the other ululated.

In some respects, the loss of Silaka is experienced more acutely by subsistence fishers, because it translates directly to their loss of their traditional fishing ground, and thus their fishing rights. To appreciate this reality, one only has to listen to many a local person state that God brought their forefathers to the sea and their lives have since been inextricably intertwined with it in a way that they cannot survive without it.

3. The International Experience

The international experience of small-scale fishing communities reflects general apprehensions about distributional inequities, about exclusion and marginalization, even with the introduction of property rights, since in their application they valorize capital over labour and community interests. Acquisitions of individual transferable quotas by corporations inevitably destroy the viability of many smaller communities that do not have the financial resources to compete for the purchase of quotas and licenses. (Copers 1997). Yet evidence in some contexts does indicate that disadvantaged coastal communities have, in fact, benefited from the introduction of property rights in fishing. Hoopers (2000) in reference to the case of the Maoris in New Zealand, maintains that a system of well-defined property rights allows the rights of indigenous communities to be recognized and provided for.

On the other hand there is a broad agreement about a rights-based approach to fishing, including the introduction of artisanal and trawl-free zones in coastal fishing, aquarian reforms in inland fishing, fishing rights in reservoir fishing, transferable quotas in large scale fishing, reallocation of rights in commercial fishing, or the assertion of traditional rights in marine fishing. The approach adopted in this paper is focused on the latter, as it seems that generally, while fishing among indigenous coastal communities, is recognized world wide as a practice grounded in heritage, not much research has been done in this area. There is also, a broad consensus to the adoption of fishing rights regimes in consultation with fishing communities and implementing these regimes in a participatory manner. The role of Non Government Organizations and fisher's movements could come to the fore in this regard. International literature also highlights the perspectives of labour, gender and human rights to ensure equity and sensitivity in the manner in which some of these regimes are defined, adopted and practiced. Overall there seems to be a lot that remains to be done in the management of small scale fisheries of the world.

4. The South African Experience

The South African subsistence management experience is based mainly on a comparatively advanced piece of legislation, namely, the Marine Living Resources Act (MLRA) of 1998. This act has gone further than the international norm in that it encompasses a wider realm of activities including 'not for profit' as well as some recreational and small-scale commercial activities. According to the Subsistence Fishing Task Group (STFG, 2000) one of the problems of the South African legislation is that it lacks specificity and thus is inadequate in facilitating implementation. Criteria to qualify for subsistence, according to this policy, include poverty, dependency on fishing for livelihood, selling limited locally, use of low technology gear and living close to the resource and history of involvement in fishing. Wide-ranging as these criteria may be, they are prone to serious deficiencies at implementation stage. For instance, the requirement that selling and harvesting should be limited to close to the point of domicile, namely, not further than 20 km has serious implications on pricing, and thus the capacity to derive livelihoods from fishing. By making subsistence fishing economically less attractive, the legislation also has reduced the subsistence fishing effort and thus served to protect other sectors of fishing from competition, for instance, the large commercial fishing companies. As a corrective measure, a case can be made in South Africa, for local community fishing rights based on a combination of territorial fishing rights and locally determined quotas (Arnason, 2006).

The permits issued to subsistence fishers are specifically designed, at best, to meet the needs of poor people with few economic alternatives. The large majority of subsistence fishers in South Africa are indeed very poor. In most cases their fishing activities hardly suffice for the basic necessities of life and do not provide adequate returns to make improvements in their lives. The rapid expansion of market oriented fishing activity worldwide has added urgency to the need for drastic action to reposition subsistence fishers as an important stakeholder in the fishing industry. Yet in developing countries, including South Africa, the immediate threat to small scale fisheries often comes from the encroachment on inshore fish stocks by industrial fishing operations. These are often encouraged by governments anxious

to promote industrialization and to develop export industries for high value species like shrimp.

Since 2007 the media has reported a significant number of massive foreign trawlers that have been registered in South Africa, despite a government moratorium on new registrations, which is meant to curb overfishing. The boats are owned by consortia of wealthy ship owners who enter into empowerment contracts with black partners. The beneficiaries naturally counter the arguments against overfishing by claiming that the acquisition of the fishing vessels in this way is the only way they, as previously excluded black companies, could survive open competition in the industry. Predictably some of these companies are owned by black political and business elites. The reality is that these developments leave the subsistence fisher in Port St Johns even more marginalized.

5. Subsistence in Caguba and Scambeni Villages

The 'Wild Coast' has always been renowned as a hotspot of botanical diversity and a zone of endemism, with still an unknown number of endemic plants, shrubs, trees and grasses. A number of nature reserves exist here, for example, Silaka, Hluleka, Cwebe, Mkambati and Dwesa, serving to protect the flora and the fauna while plans are afoot to consolidate some of these parks into even larger spaces. To complete the picture, one has to point out that the unsurpassed splendour of the physical landscape that makes up this coastal area is only matched by the poverty and squalor that characterizes the majority of its inhabitants. One would be hard pressed to find a better example of an eco-frontier – a site of much contestation, marginalization, cooption, all played out against a back drop of increasingly obscuficating environmental discourse.

The history of subsistence fishing is more ingrained than it is often acknowledged. Branch *et al.* (2002) maintains that the practice has continued at least for more than 100 000 years. Yet colonization has only impacted during the past 400 years at the most. Furthermore, because of its relative isolation, the 'Wild Coast' has escaped some of the effects of integration to the rest of the country and the world.

This has naturally contributed to the relative conservation of the natural resources here, as utilization in the past was largely based on low- intensive local knowledge systems. Fishing among the communities here is entirely subsistence and commercial fishing is virtually unknown. There are several reasons for this, one of which being that access to the sea by commercial boats is not very good due to the rugged nature of the coast line and the frequency of wind storms, which results in a notoriously tempestuous ocean. Of course poverty among local subsistence fishers would preclude them from owning commercial boats, even if physical conditions allowed their use. Added to these conditions is also the effect of the greater distance to the ocean that was caused by the removal of the villagers from Silaka. Yet fish stock from the 'Wild Coast' is under as much threat from over-harvesting as in any other part of the South African coast because international and South African trawlers continue to plunder the 'Wild Coast'. Calls for declaring some sections of this coast 'marine protected areas' have alienated rather than benefited the local indigenous populations, because the design and execution of the fishing policy has had the effect of regulating the people out of subsistence fishing, which they regard as their right.

Port St Johns is a small tourist resort, which shows greater evidence of modernization and linkage to the world economy, especially through tourism. Territorial contestation and conflict seem to be even more apparent in stark relief here as various local players position themselves in relation to the tourist industry. Hotel owners and other hospitality establishments, for example, do not hesitate to exploit the local subsistence fishers for their catch, knowing that their harvesting and selling radius is restricted by both the law and their immobility. The situation is not far different in the case of the many white owned cottages that dot the coast line. Kuper (2003) asserts that the maximum effect of the politics of space is probably evident in colonial countries where white settlers assumed and retained control over strategic resources. This view could not be more true for the study area. Tourist landscapes here are developed and marketed under the agency of national and international economic and political institutions which lie outside the control of the majority of local residents who inhabit these spaces. Development in Port St Johns is mostly for the consumption by a leisured class of tourists, rather than accommodating the needs and aspirations of local inhabitants. Even the recent

emphasis on eco-tourism in the 'Wild Coast', which ostensibly markets indigenous cultures, is intended to satisfy a narrowly defined desire of foreign tourists to consume 'authentic' landscapes as a means to experience imagined communities of exotic and colourful people. Even when the local people are involved in the tourism economy, changes to the physical environment and way of life, or the actual presence of tourists, can provoke opposition and sometimes conflict. Local people, in such cases, develop strategies of resistance to mitigate the effects of the tourist presence, by creating boundaries to protect pockets of their territory for own use, or even target the tourist industry by engaging in vandalism and poaching. Lack of meaningful involvement and engagement in the development of subsistence fishing is likely to have exacerbated the problem of day fishers, most of whom have converted to night and, obviously, illicit fishing, with devastating results for the fishing industry.

Territoriality in South Africa presents a unique and interesting phenomenon. It bears the legacy of 400 years of colonialism and apartheid, during which time racial separation and exclusion became entrenched in the national psyche. It should be no wonder that such opposing world views about landscapes should dominate the population's consciousness. This is all the more true considering the fact that the territorial legacy of colonial and apartheid engineering shows little signs of reversal in the new dispensation. In this regard Ntsime (2004), Ramutsindela (2004) and Guyot (2008) agree that colonial practices around protected areas did not necessarily end with the end of formal colonization. Instead they have continued in new forms of colonization, almost unabated. Fanon (1961) echoes similar sentiments when he says that the colonial world is a world divided into compartments. The lines that divide these frontiers, are often guarded through strict enforcement and regulation. Decolonization might require the dismantling of these frontiers and the bringing down of the guard.

Evidence of the regulation alluded to above is the institutional context within which subsistence fishing is practiced in the 'Wild Coast'. A minimum of five state ministries (likely to be more now with the latest increase in the number of national ministries) have line functions that have a direct bearing on the practice. Most of these ministries operate at local, regional provincial and national levels. Apart from

the inertia and the disjunctures these structures create, other problems relate to lack of capacity and political will to meet the needs of local communities. Law enforcement with regard to the scourge of poaching has almost collapsed partly because to deal with the problem the law enforcers need the full cooperation of the local people, which is not forthcoming because the inter relations are hostile. Local media often refer to the situation as a war, with poachers winning the war.

The view that local subsistence fishers express is that the open participatory models advocated by the state do not sit well with them, as they allow a chance for everybody in the community, including those with no positive contribution to make, to have a say in the decision making processes. The traditional leader and his Council are normally regarded as the centre of authority in traditional societies and participation in meetings is usually stratified according to age and gender. The new constitutional democratic order requires absolutely open democratic participation, without qualifications. Some of the worst conflicts occur between the democratically elected political structures and the traditional structures.

Two cornerstones of the management of fisheries in South Africa are fishing licences and individual harvesting quotas. Subsistence fishers are licensed to carry out fishing operations in a stipulated area for harvest of a given species of fish using specified fishing methods. They supply the local hospitality industry with fish within a restricted radius, though at obviously reduced prices. In Caguba and Scambeni, because of the long distance to the nearest local hotel, this market is not available to the local fishers. Selling is thus restricted to a few week-ends when cottage dwellers visit the coast. The permit system limits the number and type of fish each permit holder can harvest per day provided that the season is also appropriate. The application of the quota system in both villages has generated a lot of unhappiness. The biggest problem is the small quantity of allowable catches per day, as it does not meet the nutritional requirements of the local families. Fishers complain that permits were unaffordable at R50-00 each, and they took too long to be issued. Many women felt angry that they should be hounded for permits by young male environmental compliance officers. Some claimed that they have stopped going to the sea as they can no longer justify the effort, worsened by the long distance they have to travel on foot. Underlying the many complaints about the subsistence

fishing regime, were deep feelings of alienation and the total rejection of the regulations, which the fishers felt were imposed on them. Their general feeling is that the sea had been part of their life for centuries without any threat to environmental sustainability. To be separated from the sea is to be separated from their life and heritage.

6. Conclusion

Subsistence fishing during the time of apartheid was not permitted. Yet the state treated the practice at worst with benign neglect, neither encouraging it nor actively stopping it. The result was that the practice mostly continued quietly without attracting much notice. In Caguba and Scambeni the first major threat to subsistence fishing came with the relocation of the local people from their traditional fishing area in Silaka to the villages of Caguba and Scambeni during the 1960s. When the new national government brought about a new regulatory framework for fishing and restitution of land rights, which included subsistence fishing for the first time, the old ecofrontiers remained as lines of conflict, confrontation, subjugation, manipulation, cooptation, marginalization and environmental obfuscation, which is likely to bedevil the question of management, conservation, ownership and utilization of natural resources for some time in South Africa.

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6

Questioning Homogenous Degradation Narratives in Transkei: Livelihoods and Natural Resource Use in two Pondoland Villages

Flora Hajdu

Water-carrying to the village (picture : J. Dellier, 2009)

1. Introduction

This paper aims to investigate if the concept of African degradation narratives can be applied in the former homeland Transkei in South Africa. It points to South African discourses on degradation in the former homelands, and presents a study

from two villages in the Pondoland area of Transkei where findings might challenge some generalised beliefs about Transkeian livelihoods and degradation.

In South Africa, the former homelands have in the past often been described as overpopulated and severely environmentally degraded. Bundy's statement that the homelands with time deteriorated into "eroded, overstocked and overcrowded rural ghettoes" (1972:369) and Nel and Davies' description that "the former Homelands are characterized by extreme overcrowding and frequent environmental collapse" (1999:260) certainly conveys a negative view of the situation. This view has been challenged more recently by some researchers, though it is still repeated by others as well as by NGO's, policy-makers and the general public. To a certain extent the belief that the Transkei environment is under extreme pressure informs policy development today. Though environmental degradation in some areas of the homelands is a well-established fact, degradation sometimes tends to be exaggerated and generalised to all areas. Thus, areas like Pondoland, which is fairly sparsely populated and endowed with plentiful natural resources in the form of forests, ample rainfall and good grazing lands (Beinart, 2002a), are also included in these generalisations.

The livelihoods of rural people in Transkei tend at times to be viewed as consisting of subsistence agriculture, livestock farming and collection of natural resources, combined with remittances from labour migrants and governmental grants. For example, The White Paper for Sustainable Coastal Development in South Africa states that: "the economy of the region [i.e. Wild Coast in the former Transkei] is based to a large extent on subsistence agriculture and on income from pensioners and migrant labourers working outside the region" (DEAT, 2000:section 4.4.3). Statements like the above conjures up an image of local people either engaging in agriculture or other forms of natural resource use, or sitting down and waiting for grants and remittances to flow into their bank accounts.

Rural livelihoods in this region are however dynamic and I will in this paper hypothesise that livelihoods might have changed during the past 10 years in favour of more local economic activities, even though grants are still very important contributions for many households. Thus, the above view might suggest a higher

dependence on agriculture and natural resource use than what is the case currently in some areas. I will also argue that there are many different local situations in Transkei, where jobs are more accessible in some areas than others, and where natural resources are used to higher or lower extent across the region in different localities, as well as between different households within the same village. It is therefore not advisable to generalise about the livelihoods in the region across space and time.

The degradation narrative is often linked to a view of local people as highly dependent on natural resources, because it is believed that local people are degrading their environment through over-using resources, an old and powerful narrative with roots in the "tragedy of the commons" rhetoric (Hardin 1968, 1999). Though degradation narratives have been increasingly questioned all over Africa, including in Southern Africa, these narratives still exist and influence policies and discourses about rural livelihoods today.

As I will show, the natural resource use that does take place in the two studied villages cannot be obviously correlated with severe environmental degradation or deterioration. Both colonial and apartheid policies have had severe detrimental effects in the study area, but these effects are primarily on people's livelihoods and self-esteem, rather than on the environment. The evidence from these tow villages, even if they should prove to be exceptions to the rule, shows that there is a reason to question a generalised and hopeless picture of Transkei as a place of severe degradation.

2. The African degradation narrative

In this paper I argue that the view of some researchers, and many policy-makers and South Africans, about local livelihoods and the state of environmental resources in the study area can be understood as a part of a larger phenomenon - the 'African degradation narrative'. This concept was born through research during the last two decades, when a new generation of empirical researchers have re-examined many of the narratives of past environments and present degradation in different parts of

Africa, challenging firmly held beliefs and dispelling myths surrounding these issues (e.g. Stringer, 2009; Stringer and Reed, 2007; Rohde *et al.*, 2006; Mortimore and Harris, 2005; Ovuka, 2000; McCann, 1999; Leach and Mearns, 1996; Fairhead and Leach, 1995, 1996). They recognise a degradation narrative in Africa, which according to Hoben (1995) is partly rooted in an old, resilient myth about Africa's past and present – that people lived in harmony with nature in the past and due to bad practices, colonialism, overpopulation (the explanations vary) they are presently degrading their environment.

A part of this discourse includes that 'degradation' is rarely precisely defined but used as a blanket term to suggest problems that can include deforestation, desertification, soil and grassland quality deterioration, erosion, loss of biodiversity, invasion of alien plants, bush encroachment, and so on. The discourse around generalised "degradation" rarely acknowledges that all these processes are to a certain extent natural environmental changes, that all human activity has effects on the environment, and that the classification of changes as "degradation" is a subjective statement.

This generalised environmental degradation is often connected with a view of the local population as highly dependent on environmental resources and a tendency to connect poverty to environmental degradation as well as local incompetence in land use (Kepe, 2005). Local people are seen as overexploiting the resources because of ignorance, and/or because they are in dire need and can thus not be expected to care for conservation ideals (e.g. Moffat, 1998). In fact, this idea of the connection between poverty and degradation is so strong that degradation of natural resources is often simply assumed in areas of widespread poverty, as Farrington *et al.* (1999) show in their study area.

Maddox (2002) traces this narrative of environmental degradation caused by African land-use practices and growing populations back to the views of early British colonial officials. The view has been perpetuated over the centuries, and during the droughts and famine crises in the 1980's, the image of a full scale 'environmental crisis' in Africa was cemented by Western media (Anderson and Grove, 1987). Today, the narrative fills the function of focusing the problem and its solution on

local, technical solutions, instead of acknowledging its uncomfortable global political and structural connotations (Bailey and Bryant, 1997; Neumann, 2005).

The perhaps most well known example of the body of literature on the "African degradation myth" is Fairhead and Leach's work from 1996 entitled *Misreading the African landscape*. They show how the savannah landscape in their West African study area has been misread by administrators, policy-makers, scientists, development agencies and NGOs. These actors have conveyed the image of the savannah landscape as degraded in a massive body of scientific texts, policy documents and popular media, resulting in these images' perpetuation in the everyday discourse on the environment. A firm conviction on many levels holds that the area has been originally covered by a dense forest, which the inhabitants have converted into a savannah through their practices of shifting cultivation and fire management. Fairhead and Leach show that the local population "provide quite different readings of their landscape and its making […] representing their landscape as half-filled and filling with forest, not half-emptied and emptying of it"(1996:2). Through air photography, archival and oral sources they show that forests may be the result of human settlements in the first place rather than in danger of disappearing because of them, thus challenging the dominant degradation narrative in their study area.

In a later work, Fairhead and Leach (2003) analyse how these misconceptions can arise. They show how "truths" about a region, that may initially come from very questionable sources, through the co-production between media, educational material and policy can become an intertextual field of taken-for-granted truth in which the need to assert the truth scientifically no longer exists. They point to the fact that media and educational reporting in itself invites to simplification, and thus penetrating and complex academic analysis is discouraged and excluded from the world of rapid policy-making, where simple solutions are in high demand. These ideas have been further researched in other parts of Africa, for example in Ethiopia where Keeley and Scoones (2003) observed how certain dominant policy concerns could create certain types of science.

Because of the degradation narrative, even small changes in the environment tend to be regarded as 'negative trends', and further examination departs from this assumption. Dahlberg, however, points out that in her study area in Botswana, "instead of increasing degradation, what emerged was a picture of fluctuating environmental conditions" (1996:13). Many changes were caused by isolated events, while long term trends had a small and uncertain environmental impact. Dahlberg continues:

> *"environmental conditions were hardly ever found to fit definitions which describe degradation as an effectively irreversible process. Instead they were found to constitute stages in environmental cycles caused by human land use in conjunction with natural variability (1996:14)."*

Beinart supports this argument when stating that "measuring change in terms of movement away from a pristine environment, and calling all change degradation, is of limited value. Human survival necessitates environmental disturbance, nor is nature in itself static" (2003:390). Beinart also points out however, that this should not be seen as a reason to stop talking about environmental degradation, as if it would always be entirely a social construction. Indeed, degradation occurs and is a problem in many places, and there is a need for a way to make judgements about non-desirable environmental transformations. The problem is that the degradation discourse has come to be used for so many other purposes, as Maddox puts it:

> *"Degradation narratives have several important functions even today. They serve both within African societies and internationally to sanction the appropriation of resources by states from local communities. […] At the same time, they justify international organisations that take control over resources from African states. In a different context, governments of developed nations use these types of degradation narratives as a stick with which to beat their underdeveloped counterparts. (2002:253f)"*

3. The degradation narrative in Transkei

As mentioned in the introduction, there is widespread concern in South Africa, especially among governmental bodies and NGOs as well as among laypeople, that environmental degradation is a massive problem, particularly in the former homelands. Degradation and conflicts over resources due to overpopulation, over-utilisation of land as well as a lack of capable management and planning, are all commonly recurring themes in the academic and policy literature (e.g. Oluwole and Sikhalazo, 2008; Crais, 2003; DEAT, 2003; Durning, 1990; LAPC, 1995; McAllister ,1992; Sowman, 1993). Hoffman *et al.* in their report on *Land Degradation in South Africa* write:

> *"In the communal areas, the status of livelihoods and policy for most of this century has meant that field crop cultivation, livestock raising and the collection of fuel and other plant material have all been conducive to land degradation. Only as the 20th century draws to a close, and 'underfarming' becomes more prominent in some communal areas, is the role of the rural poor in South African land degradation starting to diminish (1999:216)."*

Degradation in the different meaning of loss of forests is another major concern, as expressed in the South Africa Yearbook 2002/03: "Forests in […] the former Transkei area of the Eastern Cape are generally small, and those that are easily accessible have been heavily exploited in the past". This concern about loss of forest cover however does not apply to all species, since one of the major conservation concerns in South Africa has come to be species of trees and plants that are non-native to South Africa (so-called invasive aliens). Large resources are being allocated to cutting down and eliminating such vegetation, even in areas where native vegetation is not under any particular threat from these non-native species, which by local people at the same time may be seen as resources as pointed out by Shackleton and Gambiza (2008).

South African nature conservation efforts stand out as particularly fierce in several ways when compared with the rest of the continent. Carruthers (1997) describes the

South African approach with phrases like “paramilitary wildlife management” and “anti-human ecology”, and Beinart (2003) points out that the South African government since its early days has persisted in creating conservation schemes and implementing them, at times with “crusading zeal”, even though these interventions usually stimulated hostility in the rural communities affected by the policies and mobilised them against the state. These policies, rooted in powerful “degradation” related narratives have, according to Rohde *et al.* “survived the transitions from colonial rule to independence and from apartheid to democracy” (2006:302).

Several authors (e.g. Maddox, 2002; Beinart, 2002b) point to an especially powerful popular opinion in South Africa that is sceptical against the farming skills of the rural “black” population. Maddox is shocked at how many South Africans are of the opinion that "black people don't really know how to farm" (2002:251), a view that I myself have often encountered among many South Africans. There is thus a strong presence of a paternalistic view with racist undertones of local people as incapable of managing their environments, which is common throughout Africa (Jones, 1999). Though local involvement is today usually stressed in approaches to environmental management in South Africa, these perceptions still prevail, and good intentions are therefore not always followed in practice.

There is however another twist in South Africa to this ‘typical’ view of poor people’s role in land degradation that reflects how degradation narratives can be recreated and reinforced and made to serve various political needs as discussed by Fairhead and Leach (2003) and Keeley and Scoones (2003). The research that took place on environmental history in South Africa at the time of its transition to democracy came to the politically important conclusion that it was apartheid policies that had led to degradation in the homelands (Carruthers, 2002; McCann, 1999). In reports criticising apartheid policies, the state of the homelands were described with much emotion:

> *“Many of the homelands bear more resemblance to the face of the moon than to the commercial farms and game reserves that cover the rest of the country. [...] apartheid has been as devastating for South Africa’s environment as for its people (Durning, 1990:11).”*

This conclusion thus had a clear political relevance in these times in South Africa, as there was a strong societal need for scientific proofs of the fact that apartheid needed to be abolished. The chain of events was established as such: apartheid policies forced too many people to live on too little land, this led to an over-utilisation of resources and that in turn led to degradation. For many areas, this explanation was true, but since this chain of events became established as a degradation narrative and generalised to all former homeland areas, it has led to unnecessary concern over local overuse and degradation, and sometimes harsh restrictions in local natural resource use, also in areas where overuse or degradation cannot be established. Because of this link between the degradation narrative and past apartheid injustices, it is today difficult for researchers to point out that there might not be overuse or degradation in some areas of the former homelands without seeming to suggest that apartheid policies did not lead to environmental problems.

Such a process of “truth-creation” can take place in the face of evidence that clearly counters the dominant narrative. Maddox argues that scholars often “believe the narrative instead of the evidence” (2002:254) when it comes to degradation and its causes, and shows how scholars may selectively choose the evidence that supports the narrative and ignore evidence that counters it. The falsification is thus repeated and regenerated, with researchers using the ‘fact’ of Transkeian degradation as a predetermined point of departure for studies.

Many researchers in South Africa have however recently voiced their views on degradation-related narratives in several important ways (c.f. Stringer and Reed, 2007; Maddox, 2002; Beinart, 2002b). McAllister (2002) points to the example of grasslands in Africa, which by ecologists in the past have been considered to be a 'non-natural' state of vegetation that would revert to forest if it were not for anthropogenic factors like grazing of cattle and human-induced fire management. However, he shows that the South African grassland biome, covering 27% of South Africa, has probably been around since before humans could have a major impact on the vegetation, and is mainly climatically controlled. Ekblom (2004) similarly argues that the preoccupation with a presumed detrimental local human use of landscapes sometimes leads to the neglect of larger-scale factors in the analyses of landscape change. Thus, “We should be careful not to overestimate the ability of

humans to transform nature and likewise careful of underestimating the power of nature as an active agent in shaping human actions" (Stonich comment on Escobar, 1999).

In Pondoland, Kepe and Scoones (1999) have reviewed archaeological and written sources, and agree that grasslands have dominated here for at least 2000 years. Kepe (2005) furthermore shows that grass burning by local people, which is often made out to be a highly detrimental practice, in fact has many important social and ecological functions. On the related topic of deforestation, Beinart writes:

> *"The notion that Africans have deforested the areas they occupy remains a powerful one in South African literature, especially with respect to the former African homelands. It may be correct, and pockets of dense indigenous forest have certainly been reduced in some areas. But there is limited systematic study of vegetation in these areas of South Africa over the long term. [...] South Africa as a whole is almost certainly more treed now than it has been for some centuries, because of widespread planting of exotic species in many different locales (2002b:21)."*

This discussion has shown that there are reasons to suspect that the generalised views of degradation in Transkei fits into a context of an 'African degradation narrative', and thus caution, and a need for examining facts, before making sweeping assumptions about the presence, extent and causes of environmental degradation in the study area is merited.

4. Study area: description of the villages and livelihood activities

The study area in coastal Pondoland (O.R. Thambo District Municipality, Eastern Cape Province) is marked in Figure 6.1. The two case study villages, Cutwini and Manteku, are close to the coast of the Indian Ocean, both at the end of roads coming from the more populous inland area, where Lusikisiki is the closest trading centre. The villages have no electricity or healthcare facilities, but do have primary schools in the local area. The roads are in problematic condition but can still be trafficked by local pickup-taxis.

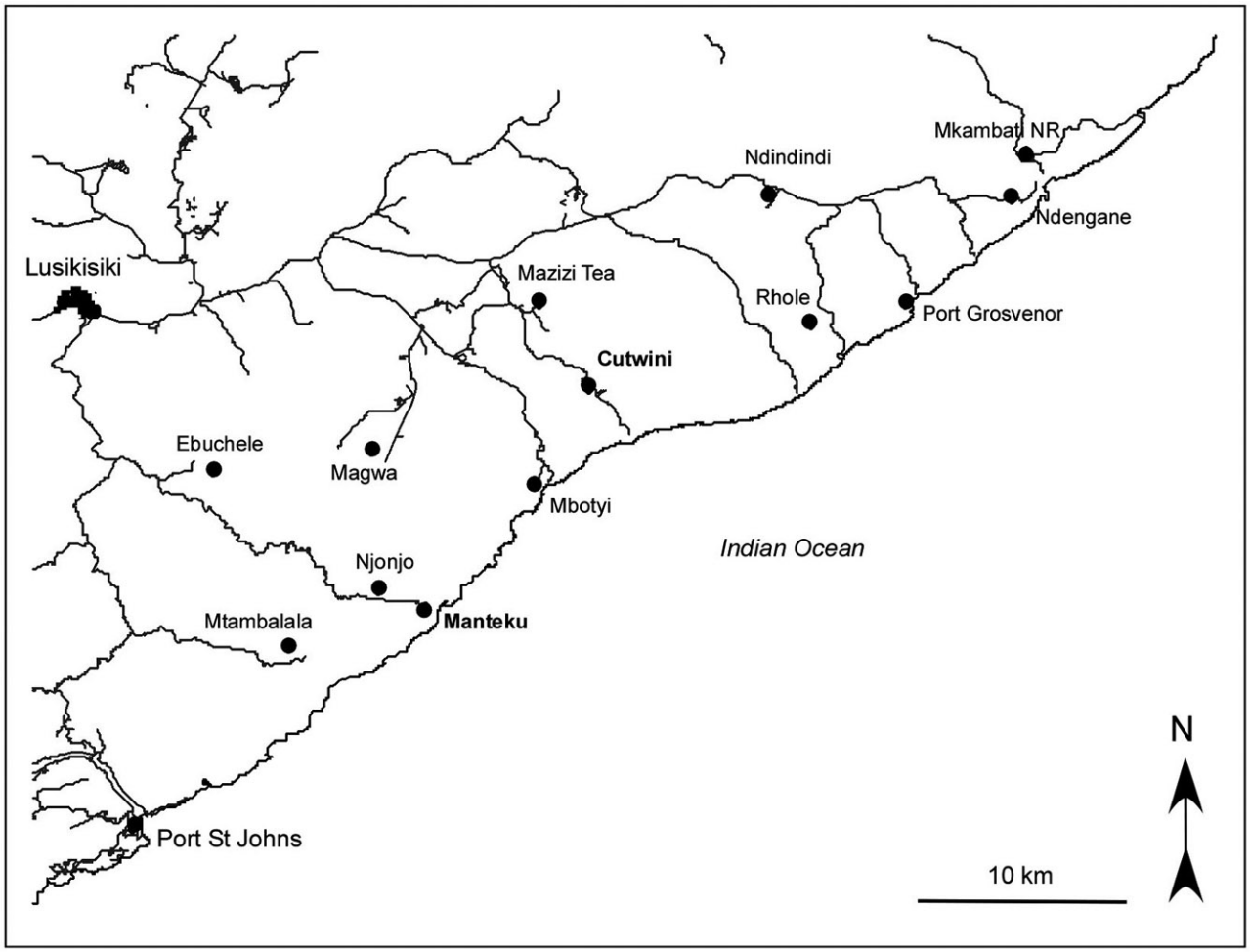

Figure 6.1 : Map of the study area, coastal Eastern Pondoland

Map supplied by Surveys and Mapping, Cape Town, edited by the author

The villages were selected from the coastal villages of former Lusikisiki district after discussions with local NGOs to on the basis that they were somewhat different from each other and in no way particularly exceptional in terms of available livelihood opportunities. The Pondoland study area in Transkei was recommended by many researchers as well as NGO-workers, as it was seen as under-researched. Also, the area was one of the poorest and seen as more "traditional" than many other parts of Transkei and therefore it was assumed that people would be more dependent on natural resources here. At the same time, several big developments (such as a Pondoland National Park, dune mining, a coastal road, forestry programmes and eco-tourism ventures) had been proposed for this area, which could unleash conflicts over resources. The research project had the initial aim of focusing on the assumedly problematic human-nature interaction in the Pondoland study area from

a rural livelihoods perspective. The final aim became more complex and the focus shifted towards understanding the complexities of rural livelihoods composition and people's strategies when choosing between available opportunities.

Cutwini and Manteku consisted in 2002 of 152 and 86 households respectively. There are some important geographical differences between the two villages, where Manteku is right by the sea and has scattered patches of forest throughout the village, while Cutwini is located on an elevated grassy coastal plateau about 1-2 km inland with a steep rocky coast leading down to the sea, next to a large and impenetrable indigenous forest. Cutwini has a history of people colonising a protected winter grazing area only to be forcibly resettled into a nucleated grid-patterned village within the same area in the mid 1960's. Manteku is an older village, where people more voluntarily moved closer to a road over time but still retained a more scattered settlement pattern.

5. Research methodology

I collected data for this study during eight visits (at different times of the year) to Cutwini and Manteku between 2001 and 2009, spending in total about 9 months in the area, living with local families in the two villages. In 2002 I interviewed every household in both villages, and collected data on all aspects of their livelihoods – jobs, formal and informal, grants, agriculture and natural resource use, and people's views on livelihood related matters. I employed local assistants from the village to help with these interviews. They were socially skilled men and women between 20 and 40 years old who spoke good English and were respected in their communities. Each interview took about 1 hour and parts of the interviews were conducted by the research assistant alone.

In 2002 I furthermore made 14 additional, longer in-depth interviews with people who were involved in various livelihood activities or possessed knowledge about important issues in the communities. In 2003, 15-16 months after the initial household interviews, I made 35 follow-up in-depth interviews households in Cutwini and Manteku. These interviews focused on changes in livelihood situations

and the selection was made to include households involved in different livelihood strategies as well as all of those families whom I had deemed most vulnerable after the first survey (usually those who had no major livelihood activity).

In order to absorb as much information as possible on existing knowledge about local situations in the field area, I interviewed/discussed with 23 different researchers with various backgrounds at different universities and research institutions across South Africa, as well as the representatives of four different NGOs that were working in the area. Several of these were recurring contacts. I also interviewed a local ward councillor and a chief to get insight into the processes of development initiatives in the area. Major employers in the area, such as the management at the Mazizi Tea Plantation, and project managers for poverty relief programmes working in the area, were also interviewed, many of these in 2003 and 2005.

Interviews with more senior officials were usually conducted in English, whereas other interviews were translated by a local translator. Everyone approached for an interview, who were at the time available and unoccupied, accepted to participate.

6. Calculating the relative value of livelihoods

Wishing to get a comprehensive understanding of the livelihood composition of the two villages, I have calculated the relative importance of different local livelihood activities. The calculation is based on the data from the household interviews as well as other interviews and discussions with research assistants. In order to assess relative importance, I had to establish a common ground for analysis, in this case I chose to calculate village averages of various livelihood's contributions to household income. I thus chose to put monetary values to different environmental resources. This approach, however, neglects everything except monetary contributions of different livelihood activities. For example a garden can have other benefits than simply producing food – it can work as a safety-net and a back-up strategy in case other livelihoods fail. Furthermore, agriculture and livestock farming has a strong cultural significance and cannot for some people be simply substituted with money.

The exercise is nevertheless interesting for the purpose of comparing different livelihood activities in terms of their contributions to total household livelihoods.

In 2002, average household income in the two villages was approximately between R 1200 and R 1600 per month, with very few households having less than R 500 per month (these households were usually in a transitional phase) and only one household having above R 5000 per month. Most of this income came to the household in the form of money, while a smaller part of the income was in the form of resources such as vegetables, meat and firewood. If compared to the cost of living expenses, as obtained from interviews, the average incomes of both villages seem sufficient to sustain an average family with the basic necessities of life. This, however, does not mean that people feel secure about their livelihoods, and there are also vulnerable families who do not have any incomes and who are invisible in this type of calculation based on averages. Since 2002 there has definitely been an increase in household income that is larger than the increase in living expenses, raising living standards for most households, but as I have not made any new village-wide interviews I cannot determine by how much.

Table 6.1 illustrates the relative importance of different livelihood activities in each village. The monetary value that each livelihood activity contributes with to each household has been added together and divided by the number of households. As can be seen, jobs account for the major part of rural livelihoods in these two villages, and these are mainly jobs in the local area including formal employment, poverty relief programmes and informal businesses. Grants are second to jobs in importance, and all forms of natural resource use, including agriculture, livestock rearing, marine resource use and firewood collection constitute only one-sixth of local livelihoods.

Job opportunities in the local area consist of Mazizi Tea Plantation and Ntsubane State Forest close to Cutwini, and informal holiday cottages and nature conservation offices close to Manteku, in addition to jobs that are available in most villages, such as cattle dipping supervisor and teacher, and jobs that can be found in surrounding villages, such as road building projects or jobs in shops and garages in Lusikisiki. Generally, people can commute to their jobs on a daily basis. By “local” I mean that

the job is not outside the municipality, but most of the local jobs are within walking distance from people's homes, though some have chosen to stay with friends or relatives closer to their workplace during some days of the week.

In 2002, two poverty relief programmes were working in the area, Working for Water and Working for the Coast, employing people in both villages. Since then, many other state and NGO-led projects have mushroomed in the area.

Livelihood categories	**Livelihood strategies breakdown**	**Cutwini** % of total livelihoods	**Manteku** % of total livelihoods
Jobs: 67-71% of total	Local employment	38%	30%
	Local poverty relief programmes	11%	11%
	Local informal businesses	7%	14%
	Labour migration	11%	16%
Grants: 16-17% of total	Grants	17%	16%
Natural resource use: 13-16% of total	Agriculture	3%	3%
	Domestic animals	8%	4%
	Marine resources	3%	4%
	Firewood and other forest resources	2%	2%

Table 6.1 : Diagram over different livelihood activities' relative importance in an average household for Cutwini and Manteku respectively, calculated as percent of the total existing livelihoods.

Local informal jobs are created by small-scale private enterprising in the village, and arise from the needs of local people for transport, groceries and services. Statistics for informal businesses in South Africa from 2002 estimated that 5.1% of the population had non-VAT-registered businesses (Statistics South Africa, 2002b). In Cutwini 9% and in Manteku as many as 15% of households have an informal business (note that that is on a household and not an individual basis) and the businesses contribute with 7-14% of total livelihoods. The businesses consist of small shops or local bars, minibus services, carpentry, roofing, house building, sewing and traditional healing. These businesses have generally become more common since 2002 because of the larger amounts of money circulating in the villages lately. This increased money can to a large extent be attributed to an improved social welfare system that has been put into place during the last decade. In 2002, work was underway to improve rural access to state pensions, and since

then most old people even in remote villages have been able to apply for and collect pensions, which have steadily increased since 2002. A child grant is also being distributed and there is disabled grant and foster care grant as well.

Almost all households engage in agricultural activities, mainly through farming gardens close to their homesteads where they plant maize and vegetables. Most households have maize fields of around 1 ha. In 2002 most households planted their maize fields, though many problems such as expensive seeds and fertilizers, lack of fencing, and wild animals and livestock eating the unsupervised crops, were causing people to question the efficiency of field cultivation. The low contribution of agricultural activities to household livelihoods (3%) shows that they were probably judging the situation correctly. Since 2002, these problems in combination with new income sources and the relatively cheap price of ground maize meal have lead to many households abandoning their fields. About half of the households owned cattle n 2002, and goats were also common assets. Livestock production was a more important strategy in Cutwini, which is unsurprising considering the areas plentiful grazing lands. In Manteku, marine resource use (fishing and harvesting of shellfish and mussels) were more common than in Cutwini, which can be explained by the village's proximity to the sea. Most households in both villages used a combination of paraffin and collected firewood for cooking. Other resources, such as poles for houses, roofs and fencing, thatching grass and wild edible leaves were used to a certain extent, though the development during the past years has been in favour of building houses with bricks and tin roofs and buying poles for fencing.

The livelihood composition of these two villages is, in relation to some of the existing views about livelihood composition in rural Transkei, unexpected. The dependence on jobs for livelihoods seemingly contradicts statistics that show soaring unemployment, and the availability of local jobs belies the belief that labour migration is the only way for rural people to secure jobs in South Africa. The relative unimportance (albeit on an aggregated scale) of environmental resources to rural livelihoods contradicts some other research and raises questions about the links between rural people and their environments. In the degradation debate, it is assumed that rural people are highly dependent on their environment, and that because they are poor, they are degrading their environment since they are

overusing it. A relatively modest local use of natural resources disputes these assumptions. I will continue to examine these two issues that are raised by these results separately.

6.1 The importance of (local) jobs

As mentioned before, the general view has tended to be that rural people in the former homelands get their major monetary incomes from remittances by labour migrants or governmental grants. However, in these two villages the collective contribution of labour migrant remittances and pensions are about 30% of local livelihoods, while various types of local jobs and businesses add up to 55%.

Is there a possibility that the two villages I have studied are rare exceptions in a region where livelihoods indeed consist mainly of subsistence agriculture and migrant labour remittances? Cutwini lies close to the Mazizi Tea Plantation, and as many as 33% of the households in Cutwini had someone employed there in 2002. Not many villages lie close to such local job opportunities. However, Cutwini is otherwise isolated from opportunities that some other rural villages are closer to, such as roads, trading centres or electricity. Also, in 2002, the wages at the tea plantation were very low, only 500 Rand per month, so this is in fact below the village average household income from jobs. Also, Manteku does not lie close to a tea plantation but still reports a high contribution of local jobs to livelihoods. So the tea plantation alone cannot explain these results.

In both villages, the different local jobs that are available tend not to originate from one large employer but from the cumulative effect of adding together the people who are employed at forestry factories, small hotels, holiday cottages, clinics, schools, petrol stations, nature conservation offices, for cattle dipping, tour guiding and road constructions. Indeed, in various rural areas in Africa, studies have shown that there are many types of local job opportunities available; people are painters, potters, blacksmiths, health workers, teachers, veterinarians, NGO workers, council and local government members, guards, carpenters, barbers, butchers, preachers,

money lenders, musicians, rain makers, and waiters in bars, all depending on the location of and opportunities available in their particular rural area (Helgesson, 2006; Carswell, 2002; Ellis, 2000). To this should be added local informal businesses, such as small shops and minibus services (both often provide livelihoods both for the owner of the business and usually additional employees), traditional healers, trading, building and thatching, equipment and car repairs, tailoring, hairdressing, and so on. Many of these types of businesses are thriving in Cutwini and Manteku.

There have been few other comprehensive and recent surveys of rural livelihoods in Pondoland, but Kepe (1997 and chapter 3, this volume) found in two nearby villages that there were a number of local job opportunities and that some people managed to hold jobs in nearby trading centres on a commuter basis. When taking all these things together, it seems likely that there might be significant local variations in livelihood activities, and that there is probably a scale from low to comparatively high availability of local jobs within Transkeian rural areas, instead of a homogenous situation where local jobs are almost entirely lacking.

The fact that Pondoland as a whole has more opportunities for local employment than other coastal areas of Transkei is suggested by data compiled by the Wild Coast SDI in 1997[21], where the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector stands out as especially important in the area. A comparison with a survey from Xhora and Gatyana District (Fay *et al*., 2002) suggests that there are less work opportunities locally in other areas of Transkei, or at least that local variation in employment opportunities is high across the region. However, Pondoland is also well-known for its agricultural potential and grazing lands, and thus the results of the study on livelihoods might be expected to be biased towards a higher reliance on cultivation and livestock keeping than in the rest of Transkei.

Another important part of this discussion is the fact that I chose to calculate household rather than individual livelihoods and incomes. If viewing data on an individual basis, it is not as encouraging – for example only 37% of those who want to work in Manteku actually have jobs. The most common situation in 2002 was in

[21] "Employment per sector per magisterial district", map compiled by the Wild Coast Spatial Development Initiative, 1997, based on Development Bank of South Africa Data from 1991.

fact that only one person per household had a job, but the income of that one person provided the entire household with most of their basic needs nevertheless. This explains the apparent oxymoron that there can be high unemployment while the majority of households still have jobs as their major livelihood activity.

It is also worth to note that Cutwini and Manteku may have an unusually equal distribution of jobs within the village compared to other localities. For example, if there are 4 small shops and 4 local taxis in a village, and half of these businesses also employ people from other households as shop attendants and taxi drivers, then suddenly there are 12 households with an income from informal jobs in the village. In another village, there might only be one large shop, and the shop owner may have a taxi as well and recruit employees only from within the household, making job distribution within the village much less equal.

It is likely that the results of this study also point to the fact that there have been significant changes in rural livelihoods in recent years. Not only have poverty relief programmes and other forms of local employment been introduced, but the increased money-flow in the villages, due to these new job opportunities and the recently raised grant incomes, has led to the blossoming of various informal businesses. Jacobs asked a group of informants in the rural Northern Cape to make a matrix over change in time in "ways of working for a living, including food production" (2003:208). Agriculture and livestock keeping declined in this matrix after the 1930s, and crop farming even declined to the point of becoming negligible. Working in mines and as domestic servants peaked around the 1960s and declined thereafter, to be replaced by various small-scale jobs in the 1980's and 90's - such as sewing, harvesting grapes on farms, selling beer, making bricks and small-scale trading. This matrix correlates well with the results from my case study villages as well. Interviews with villagers, focusing on changes in subsistence strategies from the past to the present, suggest that there has first been a general shift from agriculture to wage labour, to be followed by a shift from large-scale migrant wage labour to a diversity of livelihoods, many of which are based in the local area or region.

6.2 The Relatively Low Importance of Environmental Resources

Another important result from the study concerns the use of various environmental resources (including for agriculture and livestock farming). Though authors such as McAllister attest that "survey after survey in various parts of Transkei (and elsewhere in rural southern Africa) suggest that the role that agriculture plays in meeting local subsistence requirements is negligible" (2000:1), there is confusion as to how much (or little) subsistence agriculture actually contributes to local livelihoods and a lingering suspicion that it can and should contribute with more. The attempts at reviving agriculture through various rural development programmes, such as the "Massive Food Production Programme", described in more detail by Jacobson (chapter 7, this volume), reflect this view.

In this study, I found that agriculture contributes with about 3% of total household livelihoods. This figure is close to the 4% contribution of agriculture to rural incomes that a rural household survey found in 1998 (Mfono, 2008). Though there are some families that manage to meet almost all their maize and vegetable requirements through farming, these families constitute only 3,5% of all families, and it is also important to remember that households have many other needs than vegetables and maize. Studies like Bundy (1979) and Beinart (1992) also point to the low reliance on and productivity of agriculture in Transkei. At the same time, Beinart cites a study that in 1985 found agricultural production to be on average enough for staple requirements in the Amadiba coastal area in Pondoland, which lies just north of my study area. Still, Beinart chooses to avoid the terms "farmer" and "peasant" when referring to local people in Transkei in order to indicate their relatively low focus on agricultural activities. In this context the conclusion that agriculture contributes relatively little to rural livelihoods conforms to previous research, even if this research might not be fully acknowledged, or is differently interpreted, by development planners.

With regard to the contribution of domestic animal ownership to livelihoods, this study found that there was a difference between the two villages, with this activity contributing 8% of livelihoods in Cutwini and 4% in Manteku. In both villages however, animals contribute more to livelihoods than agriculture, even though it is

difficult to estimate this very precisely and the exact figures should be interpreted with caution. It is important to note that many households do not have any livestock at all, and thus the average figures are especially misleading in this case. It is likely that livestock contributes with a significant part of livelihoods to those households that own larger herds, while many other households benefit marginally from owning a couple of chicken or a pig. However, cattle ownership has been shown to also benefit villagers who do not own any cattle of their own (McAllister, 1992) and for those who own cattle, they represent significant savings that can come in very handy in times of crisis (Shackleton *et al*., 2000). Also, cattle have strong cultural significance and therefore viewing them as simply a contribution among others to livelihoods is problematic (Ferguson, 1990; Ainslie, 2005; and Beinart, chapter 7, this volume).

On the question of use of natural resources other than for agriculture (e.g. marine resources or forest resources), there has been various studies on different resource use in selected localities, but these have led to somewhat divergent conclusions. In this study, I found that such resources are mainly important as complementary and back-up strategies for most household and that the contribution to overall livelihoods is quite low. However, some poor and vulnerable families do survive mainly on marine and forest resource use, and to these families the resources are of high importance (see Mniki, Chapter 5, this volume). Studies that attempt to put values on natural resource use, such as Shackleton et al. (2004) sometimes risk over-estimating the value that these resources have for local people depending on how they assign value (see discussion in Hajdu (2006). Kepe has published several studies on natural resource use, looking into wild edible leaves (2008), grasses for craft-making (2001), and grasses for grazing (2005, Kepe and Scoones, 1999), but seldom do studies put figures on how important these resources are in relation to other livelihood strategies.

Though there are many examples of conflicts over natural resources between the state and local populations in Transkei (c.f. Beinart, 2002b; Dye, 1992; McAllister, 1992; Lasiak and Field, 1995; Hockey and Siegfried, 1988; Fay *et al*., 2002; Fay, 2003; Kepe, 1999, 2003b; Kepe, et al. 2001; Ainslie, 2005, as well as several of the papers in this volume) these conflicts do not always provide a picture of the importance

these resources have in the totality of local livelihoods. There can be frustration over resource use restrictions for other reasons than high dependence on the resources - for example people have been experiencing various measures of control and restrictions in their lives historically and are therefore sensitive to such things, and can also feel that the state has no right to decide such things in areas where chiefs are often seen as the ones who should make decisions over land and resources. The fact that there is much more published research on natural resource use and/or conflicts over resources than on local informal businesses or other non-environmental livelihoods, might also add to confusion on what is actually most important to local livelihoods. More research on local small-scale businesses and informal jobs is therefore needed to balance the situation.

Several studies have also, like this one, underscored local differences and heterogeneity in Transkeian livelihoods. Beinart (1992) shows, through recounting the findings of different studies in Transkei, that there is considerable variation between different localities with regard to agricultural production, the importance of livestock and the dependence on wage-work. McAllister (2000) also points to complexity and unreliability in the results of previous surveys on Transkeian livelihoods. Kepe (1997 and chapter 3, this volume) shows high diversity in local livelihoods, including local job opportunities. Thus the results from this study might not necessarily contradict other studies on natural resource use - it rather complements them by putting resource use into perspective when comparing with other livelihood strategies.

It is however important to note is that some poor and vulnerable families that do not have jobs or other means of incomes rely heavily on natural resources, and resource use can also be an important safety-net and a complementary livelihood strategy for families who do have other incomes. Though agriculture on a large scale may in fact not be cost-effective for most households, vegetable gardens can be a very good source of food and some people are also able to produce for sale in their gardens. It is also important to acknowledge that there is an essential distinction between livelihood activities that are important for survival on the one hand, and the social and cultural importance of certain natural resources on the other. Cows, for example, are associated with the payment of bridewealth and ritual slaughtering

and the amalima agricultural workgroups are important for village co-operation and social networking. Natural resource use is thus socio-culturally embedded in rural lifestyles, even if it is not always an important factor when considering total household incomes. Interviews revealed that some people like the lifestyle that comes with practicing agriculture, and especially older people have a strong attachment to agriculture and regard it as essential to a rural lifestyle. However, these elderly people have often settled down to farm and tend cattle after a life of wage-working, and should be viewed as making an active "lifestyle" choice for their old age rather than being "traditional farmers". It should be noted that choices are personal and that family history, self-image and personal preferences are very important when it comes to the choices individuals and families make regarding these issues.

Lastly, the notion that the rural areas of the former homelands are severely degraded sometimes leads to the conclusion that lack of local natural resource use is in fact caused by a degraded environment that has no resources to offer its inhabitants. I asked people both during the household interviews as well as during in-depth interviews about resource abundance and degradation in their area (I did however not engage in actual physical examinations of soils or grass quality, or other means of measuring "degradation, though aerial photo analysis of the area has shown no significant change in forest cover since 1937 (Haag and Hajdu, 2005)). The results were mixed, but no general trend towards resources becoming scarcer and more degraded could be established from people's knowledge about the resources they use.

For example, when scoring their availability of firewood on a scale from 1 (very bad) to 5 (very good), people in Cutwini gave a medium score of 3.8 while people in Manteku gave 3.1, thus a close to or above average score for both. When asked about erosion people could sometimes point out specific places in their surroundings where they saw erosion, but did not experience that this was a major problem. No gullies or other obvious signs of erosion could be observed in the villages. A general pattern in all the questions concerning quality of resources was that people noted differences in quality in different places, but could not see a general negative pattern. There were local differences between the two villages,

with people in Cutwini experiencing more problems with grassland quality deteriorating (even though they have more grazing lands available) but better abundance of firewood, while Manteku had less firewood but better grass quality and more thatching grass. As people also pointed out to me, these issues can be attributed to geographical and historical differences between the two villages, which people are well aware of and adapt to as best they can.

7. Critical Views of Transkeian Narratives

This study has pointed out that there might be a "degradation narrative" at work in Transkei that generalises problems of erosion, deforestation and grassland degradation, which all do exist in specific localities, to the whole of Transkei. This narrative has been contested by recent research but still lingers in policy documents, and NGO and public discourses. The belief that there is severe degradation all over the Transkei, linked to local overuse of resources, has been challenged by this study that shows an evidence of two villages where there does not seem to be any acute and severe degradation, and where local resources are not obviously overused.

The people in the study area use natural resources to a relatively low extent, since the vast majority of them have different types of monetary incomes as their major livelihood strategies. Except for almost daily firewood use, the majority of the rural residents of these villages make only small gardens, keep a few animals, and engage in occasional fishing and marine resource use. Thus, it seems unlikely that they would grossly overexploit the natural resources in their surroundings unless these resources are extremely fragile or under intense pressure from other factors. Also, people's own views were that their natural resources were in an average or good condition and erosion and degradation were not widely experienced problems. There thus seems to be no particular evidence to support the idea that the environment around the studied villages is severely deteriorated.

Low reliance on the environment seems to have much more complex causes than general degradation. One reason is that people have been discouraged by

government interventions that made them feel insecure in tenure, restricted garden sizes and increased monetary dependence. Another reason is that the situation with many new varieties of seeds that need expensive fertilisers and pesticides is confusing to a lot of people. In addition, agriculture requires hard labour and significant investments, while low prices of commercially produced maize and lack of access to markets for own produce combine to make agricultural investments non-profitable for rural households. The need for money and the high status of jobs also contributes to this trend.

Dahlberg (1996) points out that caution should be exercised when valuing change, either negatively or positively, in terms of degradation or development. Furthermore, varying local conditions should not be confused with degradation. Local people do not seem to make a big deal out of differences between villages – they adapt and use the resources that are available. Thus, as Fairhead and Leach (1996) point out, the interpretation of the landscape is sometimes dependent on if the person doing the interpretation chooses to have a "glass-half-empty" or a "glass-half-full"- perspective.

In discussing this issue, the political forces behind the vigour with which many of the degradation narratives across Africa are kept alive should not be forgotten. The image of the degraded savannah in West Africa attracts major international funding for environmental rehabilitation (Fairhead and Leach 1995, 1996) and in the case of South Africa, research results about degradation in the homelands were politically important (e.g. Carruthers 2002). Researchers today often seem to underscore local dependence on land and resources in order to protect local people's rights to these things – but in doing this they risk accepting the underlying suggestion that local people only have a claim to land and resources if they are dependent on them, instead of as a matter of principle.

These examples naturally do not mean that degradation in Transkei does not exist. Beinart argues that though the early conservationist discourse was "overgeneralised, uncertain in its explanations, alarmist and infused by racial ideas" (2003:367), there was in fact areas in South Africa that already in the 1930's experienced considerable agrarian problems, including problematic levels of soil

erosion and vegetation loss. In many cases and localities, there has undoubtedly been overexploitation of resources and environmental degradation, while in other places, change has been undeservedly interpreted as negative. The interesting question concerns how to distinguish between these two situations and how to analyse underling political causes for degradation narratives.

While Transkei has unquestionably experienced environmental problems like the ones described in the literature, and while many of the problems were certainly caused and exacerbated by political actions by the colonial and apartheid governments, a new challenge is now to open up for a critical examination of homogenous descriptions of the problems and their explanations. More diversity and detailed empirical examinations, and indeed much more research than the two cases presented in this paper, are needed.

In criticising generalisations about Transkei, I do recognise I can also not make generalisations, based on my limited studies, about the lack of natural resource use or the prescience of local jobs in Transkei. It is also is not my intention to dispute that there are, in specific places and at specific times, environmental problems of varying degrees of severity in South Africa, or that there are places in Transkei where local jobs are extremely rare to find. In the light of this study, however, the conclusion can be drawn that caution with regard to generalisations in Transkei is warranted. There is a need to move away from simplistic explanations on all levels, and realise that different solutions are needed in different localities.

There should also be no need for alarm if studies draw different conclusions about wage-work, natural resource use or the state of the environment in Transkei. Indeed, Meppem and Bourke (1999) point out that it would be helpful if scientific disagreement was more often clearly acknowledged, since this helps us to remember that scientific truths are but narratives, constructed in various historical and social contexts. Achieving a homogenous picture of Transkei should thus not be seen as a goal for research, just as targeting the whole region through one remedy cannot be seen as a goal for policy. Instead, a diversified picture, highlighting the heterogeneities in the Transkeian landscapes, is needed and the importance of

understanding complicated but localised situations before targeting them with policies must be stressed.

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7

Transhumance and Ticks in Pondoland: a Crisis in Livestock Management on the “Wild Coast”

William Beinart

Cattle on the Wild Coast (picture : J. Dellier, 2008)

1. Introduction

Livestock have long been central to rural society in Pondoland. They have been a source of sustenance, exchange, draught and transport. They have played a role in bridewealth transactions and, through slaughters, in customary ceremonies. They remain significant in some of these respects. They are not necessarily used in the

same way, nor everywhere equally important as an asset, but they are still ubiquitous in African areas of the Eastern Cape in general and Pondoland in particular. Land reform and land acquisition by African communities often involves, at least initially, new space for pastoral pursuits. It is important to understand changing patterns of livestock management and also the maintenance of animal health. My preliminary research in Mbotyi village, on the coast of Lusikisiki (2008-9), is part of a wider project on recent veterinary history in South Africa.[22] It suggests that there is a crisis – or at least there are some acute difficulties - in maintaining animal health.

Mbotyi is largely known outside of Pondoland as a small holiday centre on the Wild Coast. The visitors are mostly, although not only, white. This role – as will be explained - is not insignificant for local African communities as the coastal zone becomes a more central site for environmental protection and tourism. However, to local inhabitants, coastal Pondoland is not primarily the Wild Coast. It is the territory that they have occupied from time immemorial, in which they build their settlements and pursue their livelihoods, both on the land and in employment. It is not least their rangeland, and livestock can often be seen on the beaches and on neighbouring grasslands.

We know from a number of surveys that livelihoods in the rural areas of the former Transkei are increasingly generated through access to wages, government grants, and informal local employment and enterprise. But the remnant agrarian economy remains of some significance. Many homesteads have gardens, if no longer fields, and some livestock. Many families remain engaged in such rural activities on a daily basis. In conceiving environmental changes and conflicts on the wild coast, we need to understand these continuities, and also the changing patterns of livestock management.

State veterinary medicine in South Africa was highly sophisticated during the twentieth century and services were comparatively well developed; veterinary activities absorbed a major element of the Department of Agriculture's budget.

[22] The project is being headed by Dr Karen Brown, Wellcome Unit for the History of Medicine, University of Oxford, and funded by the ESRC in the UK.

From the vantage point of African rural communities, regular, compulsory dipping of livestock to combat tickborne diseases, and prevent scab in sheep and goats, became a central and unavoidable feature of state intervention in the first half of the century. In the homeland era, from 1963-1994 in Pondoland, services such as dipping were not universally maintained. Since 1994 the state has decentralised veterinary services. Financial exigencies and new approaches have reduced public investment and dipping is no longer compulsory. My research explores the range of practices used to keep animals healthy, and tries to identify major problems in the control of animal diseases. It includes bio-medical knowledge, and state services, as well as local conceptualizations of disease and treatment.

Ethnoveterinary studies are expanding in South Africa, particularly in relation to the use of plants, and the field is growing rapidly on a broader front. (Masika, van Averbeke and Sonandi, 2000; Masika and Afolayan, 2002; Cocks and Dold, 2001; van der Merwe, 2000) But there is less on the intersection between state veterinary provision and diverse aspects of local veterinary knowledge, especially in its changing form. We also need to be interested in lack of knowledge, or limits to local knowledge.

This paper is a preliminary reflection on two aspects of management and disease: historical forms of transhumance and the problems of ticks and dipping. While local practices and knowledge play some role in improving nutrition and containing disease, livestock owners' capacity to control ticks seems to be very limited – and most informants recognized this.

Other contributors to this volume are critical of external and state intrusion, of environmental regulation and new 'ecofrontiers' in the Wild Coast. They see these as disadvantaging rural communities. However, I suggest that in this case study - focusing on livestock management – the withdrawal of state facilities may be affecting rural livelihoods and the capacity to manage environments.

2. Background on Mbotyi, research and livestock in the area

I have researched in Pondoland, mostly on historical questions, on and off over a few decades, but had not worked before in this village nor on these specific issues (Beinart, 1982). I spent two periods in Mbotyi: ten days in March/April 2008 and a few weeks in February 2009.[23] I had extended interviews with about 12 older men, generally for around 2 hours, returning to most of them for follow ups of similar length, and spoke to a few of them on subsequent occasions. As my project concerns local veterinary knowledge, in-depth interviewing was most appropriate. All kept livestock, varying from 2 to 45 head of cattle and generally a smaller numbers of goats. There are very few sheep in the village. I also interviewed the headman, who lives in the village, together with a group of men at his homestead. He probably has over 80 head and is reputed to be one of the two largest cattle owners. I talked more informally to a range of other people.[24] I interviewed the state vet and spoke to officials at the Lusikisiki Department of Agriculture. All Mbotyi interviews were in Xhosa, translated by a local research assistant, Sonwabile Mkhanywa, who was a particularly valuable source of information.

Seven of the informants, including those whom I found most interesting and forthcoming, lived close by one another, in the valleys of the neighbouring Nyambala and Mzimpunzi streams. They were all brought up in the area, knew each other, and were all well-known to my assistant. They were aged between 63 and 90 and from traditionalist backgrounds, with little formal schooling, although all of them had migrated to work. None spoke English or Afrikaans, beyond a limited number of words. I sought in particular the ideas of this group, who were not representative of the village as a whole. Although there were some differences in

[23] A Fort Hare masters student, Vimbai Jenjezwa, and an Oxford doctoral student, Tim Gibbs, accompanied for some interviews.

[24] I counted between 120 and 130 in headman's herd when it was driven by two mounted men along the beach but was later told that they did not all belong to him. One other man in the village is reputed to have about the same number. Counting livestock is always problematic. Most men whom I asked gave me a quick and precise answer, and the average holdings of the cattle holders I interviewed was a little higher than that for the village as a whole. But numbers vary by year because of exchanges, thefts and deaths, and on closer discussion, it sometimes transpired that people included cattle that they were keeping for others, or that they had cattle with someone else.

their knowledge and practices, they formed part of a distinctive cluster with many similar approaches to livestock management and disease.

Mbotyi has grown quickly in recent years. The school, started in 1993, goes to junior secondary level (standard 7) and many younger people speak some English. After a number of false dawns, a relatively successful hotel has been operating since 2001 which provides employment for a number of village people in an English-speaking environment. There has long been a scattering of coastal holiday homes but tourism has grown over the last decade. The nearby Magwa tea plantation employs about 1,000 people and there is also a state forest with sawmills at Ntsubane. This is an unusual range of local paid work for a Transkeian village. Other government projects included a substantial clinic under construction in 2008-9, a state-funded a poultry project, and coastal nature conservation. There are regular taxis to and from Lusikisiki.

Pensions and other welfare payments have also increased spending power and there were a few spaza shops in operation – although no substantial retail outlet. Many people could (and almost certainly did) buy most of their staple food requirements and have a continuous supply of manufactured liquor. Partly for these reasons of local employment and local services, the settlement is expanding. I do not have any precise records, and it is difficult to interpret aerial photographs. But depending on the boundaries, the number of homesteads seems to have increased from 30-40 in the 1960s to over 300. In addition to natural increase, people have moved to the village for services, transport and employment.

Mbotyi is not planned in the mode of the rehabilitated or betterment villages that characterize much of the Transkei, with regular and rather uniform sites. It has grown organically, and people are still carving out homestead and garden sites of diverse size. But by 2009, it looked like a concentrated settlement, rather than the traditional scattered settlement.

The veterinary department in Lusikisiki kept cattle figures for each of the dipping tanks in the municipality. Mbotyi figures were 163 owners with 1,567 head of cattle, or an average of 9.6 each. This is higher than the average for Lusikisiki – 67,742 head

at 6.98 per owner. It is remarkably similar to the nearby coastal village of Lambasi which also has 9.6 per owner. The state no longer enforces compulsory dipping, nor does everyone dip at the tank. However, most people do take their cattle in for the annual anthrax and black quarter vaccination, where cattle are also tested by the government for TB. The figures are collected then and, while they are not definitive, and are possibly an undercount, they may not be too far from the mark. We have relatively good historical figures collected during the years when dipping was more rigorously enforced. Lusikisiki cattle numbers peaked in the 1930s at an average of around 110,000, reaching a height of 125,000 in 1934.[25] But they have shown a steady decline since then. Between 80,000 and 90,000 were enumerated in the early 1960s. Thus a figure of around 70,000 now seems plausible. Those interviewed in Mbotyi perceived cattle, and especially goats and sheep, to be declining in numbers. Most of the pigs were slaughtered in 2007 to combat classical swine fever.

The figures suggest that around half of the homesteads owned cattle, and some owned goats but not cattle.[26] Livestock numbers in former Transkei as a whole showed a remarkable continuity over the twentieth century up to the 1980s, by which time about half of households still owned cattle (Beinart, 1992). Flora Hajdu (2006, 150-1) completed a very detailed survey of households and livelihoods in Cutwini and Manteku, both close to Mbotyi, in 2002. She found 43 per cent and 30 per cent of households owned cattle in the two villages, with 32 per cent and 17 per cent owning goats. All the homesteads I visited kept free range chickens. Compared with the 1930s, the quantity of livestock has diminished, as has the percentage of households who own livestock (about 70 per cent in 1950). But this decline has been gradual, rather than precipitous. In villages such as Mbotyi and Cutwini livestock are still significant and ubiquitous.

Cattle are no longer as multipurpose as they were. I have not interviewed extensively on this point, but it seems clear that few people still milk their cows for

[25] These numbers are culled from the annual government livestock counts and published by the Transkeian Territories General Council and its successors.

[26] My rough calculation is based on 167 owners and about 300 households. However, some people who live beyond Mbotyi village have their animals treated in the annual vaccination at Mbotyi dipping tank so that the percentage of owners is likely to be smaller.

human consumption. Soured milk, amasi, and related milk products, are no longer a central part of the rural diet in areas such as Mbotyi. Nor are oxen used extensively for ploughing and transport by sledge. Cattle are primarily kept for exchange and slaughter. Interviews suggest that domestic slaughter of livestock is frequent, and possibly increasing. Sometimes this is associated with customary ceremonies and events such as funerals.

Prices were high in 2009 despite this narrowing of multipurpose usage. One head of cattle can fetch R4-8,000 locally, which was around half of the annual pension (R900 a month). The average owner (of about 9-10 head) in Mbotyi has perhaps R50-60,000 in capital bound up in their cattle. At this price, the market value of cattle in the village was around R9-10 million, which was more than the annual income from pensions. A goat could fetch up to R1,000, chickens R30-60. Of course only a limited percentage is sold each year and some – especially chickens - are slaughtered so that they do not materialize in cash income. Hajdu (2006, 162-3) calculated that in 2002, livestock brought in 8 per cent of average household income in Cutwini. For those who owned livestock, this figure was closer to 20 per cent. In Mbotyi, livestock sales and exchanges are still almost certainly the largest segment of the local informal economy.

3. Keeping animals healthy - transhumance and grazing

Livestock owners adopt a range of practices, both preventative and curative, to keep animals healthy. Adequate nutrition lies at the heart of their strategies. Blessed as they are with high rainfall, an absence of frost, and consequently abundant grass, vegetation and water, they do not generally have a problem in finding sufficient pastures. Nevertheless, they evolved practices which to some degree optimized use of available resources under a customary land tenure system. In Mbotyi, the great majority of livestock depend upon veld rather than fodder. Many owners followed a well-established pattern of transhumance to maximize access to pastures. Interviews suggest, however, that it is breaking down, and such changes may have some impact on animal health.

The main grazing ground for Mbotyi is Lambasi, a large area of coastal grassland, with very little settlement, to the north-east of the village, and particularly a section of it called Lubala. Mbotyi itself is surrounded by forest, which reaches down to the coastal lagoons and even the sea at points. But at the Mvekane stream about 5 km up the coast, the soils and topography change and the coastal forest ends. The pastureland starts here, on the upland at the end of Shelly beach; it stretches to the Msikaba river, about 25km away and inland for about 5-15km. Depending on its definition, Lambasi is probably around 150-200 sq km, or 15-20,000 ha. Across the Msikaba lies Mkambati, which is similar terrain. Formerly a leper hospital, parts of it are now reserved as a national park (see Kepe and Whande, Chapter 4, this volume; Kepe, 2002).

In pre-colonial and early colonial days, Lambasi was used by the paramount chief of Eastern Pondoland as a winter grazing ground. The Great Place at Qaukeni is located about 30-40 km from the coast on higher and colder ground. In the winter, the grass in the interior hardens, and is unpalatable. But the grazing on the wet coastal strip remains fresh throughout the year. At that time, Lambasi was deliberately kept free of settlement. It is also not very suitable for the mixed agriculture that characterized Mpondo subsistence patterns. Much of Lambasi is marshy, cut through with small streams, and the soil is shallow and not generally so good for cultivation. Since the 1930s settlements have spread, especially in villages on the peripheries of the pastureland, such as Cutwini, Lambasi and Ndindini, and to a lesser extent within the Lambasi grassland itseif. The government made some attempt to stop these during the 1940s and 1950s but less so since then (Beinart, 2002). The grazing grounds are now used largely by the local villagers, often throughout the year.

Mbotyi livestock owners have taken animals to Lambasi for as long as anyone remembers. They used the area for summer (October to April) rather than winter grazing and this was still the case in 2009. The oldest informant, Zipoyile Mangqukela, was born in Mbotyi and is probably around 90. This is at least roughly confirmed by the fact that he clearly remembered the visitation of *inkhumbi* or locusts in Pondoland and said he was a grown boy at the time. The key locust outbreak was in 1933 (Beinart, 2002). He remembered, as a herdboy, driving the

cattle to Lambasi and staying with them there through the summer. 'We were not schooling but herding cattle'. They had a shelter, and received supplies of maize and other food from home. They also milked the cows they were herding and picked wild fruit such as the wild banana and numnum. Numnum bush is widespread in the coastal areas and has a red, edible fruit, the size of a small plum. Lambasi was within a day's walk, so that they could return periodically for supplies. They also had to bring the cattle back to Mbotyi for dipping.

Zipoyile recalled that the livestock were so used to going to Lambasi that they would go there themselves. They hardly needed driving at the right time of year: 'you just show them the path'. Sometimes it was difficult to bring them back for dipping, because they wanted to stay there. And they were keen to return: 'You just dip them and leave them at the tank and they walk straight back to Lambasi'. But at the end of the summer, around April, 'when the colder winds start to blow, and the cattle smelt the aroma of mealies in the air', they were fetched back or started coming back to the village by themselves. After the harvest, the cattle were let into the maize fields where they consumed the stalks (and also fertilized the soil with their droppings). At the beginning of the ploughing season, after the heavy rains which usually came in September/October, and when cattle were needed at home, they also had to be herded because 'when they have finished the mealies and grass here, they hide and go back by themselves'.

Not everyone sent all their livestock away. In earlier years it was the practice to keep some milking cattle at the homesteads throughout out the summer. The headman had about 20 head of cattle at his homestead on both occasions when I was there in 2008-9. They were often down on the beach in the morning. Vuyisile Javu, who had only two head, kept them at Mbotyi. But it was clear from observation, as well as from interviews, that the majority of cattle were absent.

There are a number of reasons for a continued pattern of transhumance, partly but not wholly related to nutrition and disease. The most commonly cited reason is the problem of keeping animals off the gardens. Most people now cultivate maize (during the wet summer) and other food plants immediately next to their homesteads, and most do not have fences around their maize gardens. As the boys

are at school, it is difficult to find herders and if the cattle and goats are allowed to roam in the village, they will eat the growing maize. A couple of older men who did keep at least some of their animals nearby the village in 2009 had to watch them through the day – and they often had to do this themselves. Zipoyile associated taking the cattle to Lambasi with the growing season, even in his youth, in the 1920s and 1930s. However, it is unlikely that this was so central a reason for transhumance in those days. At that time, a far greater portion of the maize was grown in alluvial fields in the valleys (see below), or on unsettled slopes, rather than next to the homesteads. There was a clearer separation between fields and homesteads. And there were also young boys available for herding.

There are other important reasons for transhumance. Although the grassland is rich at Mbotyi, the area for grazing around the village is relatively restricted by forests. Population and the area taken for settlement has also increased sharply. Sikhumba Malelwa said that if they all kept their livestock at Mbotyi in the summer they would exhaust the grass in a few weeks. Sidwell Caine (owns 23 head and 2 horses) mentioned 'if they keep cattle right through the year here, they will die.[27] We have to put them in the kraal every night and the mud is killing the cattle'. The livestock graze freely at Lambasi, and are not kraaled every night as they have to be in the village. Paths also get churned up by livestock near the village in the wet summer.

Moreover, the grass types at Mbotyi and Lambasi differ. At Lambasi, nkonkone (ngongoni/Aristida junciformis) is dominant. It is burnt regularly, mostly by people from surrounding settlements rather than the Mbotyi people. For much of the year it forms a dense low grass sward, also kept short by heavy grazing. Nkonkone is most valuable in spring and summer but has a longer season when managed in this way. It not only provides what they view as excellent summer grazing, but also is seen as freer from ticks.

By contrast, the grass in Mbotyi is more varied and includes a wider range of grass types. It is difficult to burn because of the settlement and it tends to grow longer.

[27] Caine is descended from a white trader and African woman. Members of this large family in Mbotyi are thoroughly integrated into Mpondo society, intermarried with local African families and Sidwell is unlingual in Xhosa.

On my two visits, in late March/early April, and in February, some of the grass on the hills immediately above the village was head height, and I was surprised that livestock owners let it grow so high. But it does provide a reserve of pasture in the winter months. Clearly, the village and its environs could sustain more livestock during the summer months, especially during the first half of the summer before the grass hardens. On the other hand, the absence of cattle for this period does protect supplies of thatch grass. Kepe (2002) charts conflicts over thatch grass in Mkambati; in Mbotyi by no means all of it was used in 2008-9 and it was not cited as an important reason for moving the cattle away.

Longer grass around the village is seen to harbour more ticks and cattle pick up ticks at head and anus height more easily. Ticks are largely dormant in the winter months from early April, when the cattle come back to the village. Thus transhumance is seen to minimize tick infestation and in general cattle owners believe that animals are less susceptible to infection. However, two diseases related to grazing in Lambasi were noted: *nonkwanyane* (stiffness) and *uqhonqa* (when a cow with a calf becomes hunched up and the backbone appears painful). Both of these may be related to deficiencies associated with continuous grazing on sourveld which is short of phosphorous and other key minerals. *Nonkwanyane* is associated with late summer and was cited as one reason for bringing the cattle back to the village.

Transhumance to Lambasi from Mbotyi enabled owners to keep more livestock than they would be able to if they used only their local area. They benefited from the richness of grazing there in the summer - 'the oxen came back fat from Lambasi' - and its relative freedom from ticks. The pattern was linked to the annual cycle of cultivation, in that the maize gardens and fields could be kept free from largely quantities of livestock during the growing season, and the livestock could feed on the stubble during the winter after the harvest. The increase in the number of big gardens next to the homesteads, in a context where there is little labour available for herding, reinforced this pattern of transhumance.

This pattern of transhumance is also labour saving. Livestock are no longer generally herded at Lambasi on a daily basis, although there are exceptions. And they don't have to be watched throughout the day in the winter in Mbotyi, because

the maize has been harvested. However, the presence of limited number of livestock in the village in the summer and larger quantities in winter, does make it very difficult to grow anything out of the communal sequence, unless gardens are carefully fenced.

Transhumance is threatened, in the assessment of cattle owners, by the rising rate of livestock theft in the rural areas. Lambasi was seen as particularly susceptible because it attracts cattle thieves. Such complaints are frequently heard throughout the Transkei and beyond. Thus Myalezwa Matwana (over 70 years old, and owns 12 head) employed a local person at Lambasi (who is also an owner) to look after his cattle, at the cost of R100 per month. Sidwell Caine decided not to send his cattle to Lambasi in recent years because of the problem of theft. Instead he kept a few in the village and sent others a few kilometers south of the village to the coastal area between Mbotyi and Manteku at the Mguqa stream. This used to be more heavily settled but some families have left because of its remoteness, lack of school, and lack of access by road. This area also has good grazing. However, Sidwell had to bring his livestock back to Mbotyi in late March, earlier than he would have liked, because of disputes over grazing at Mguqa. He herded them most days himself and was clearly amongst the more assiduous cattle owners.

Richard Msezwa lived outside of Mbotyi village, in a cluster of three rather isolated homesteads under the escarpment and near the famous Magwa falls. He had 16 head of cattle and 14 goats, and was able to graze them around his homestead and on the fringes of the local forest, throughout the year. The grasses are rich and varied there, and settlement has not increased because of its isolation. He had to walk about 7 km to Mbotyi for all services or to shop. He said that a few Mbotyi people were now also sending livestock towards his homestead because of theft at Lambasi. However, he did experience particular problems with tick infestation.

Nonjulumbha, who lives in Mbotyi (in his sixties; owns 45 head and a horse), used to send animals to Lambasi but said that they were stolen one year by ‘amakwerekwere’ (foreigners). He grazed his cattle on the valley slopes near his homestead and takes them a few kilometers directly inland, where there is a mosaic of forest patches and grassland. He used to live in this area, about half way to the

escarpment, before he moved down to Mbotyi, and knows the terrain well. He left animals there overnight but checked on them frequently. On both days that we met him, he spent a few ours walking to check his cattle.

Goats are also sometimes sent out of the village to the grazing grounds, but the perception amongst informants was that goat numbers had declined more sharply than cattle. Disease (particularly heartwater) and lameness from ticks may have been a major factor here. Goats kept near the village had to be herded because of the damage they could cause and it was difficult to find cheap enough labour to herd them. The shortage of agricultural labour in a context of high unemployment is an intriguing conundrum – which cannot be adequately addressed here.

In sum, transhumance was seen as a valuable strategy by many of the livestock owners in the village, both for adequate pastures and for animal health. It was also a well established, customary practice. While it was possible for some owners to keep some livestock around the village through the summer months, it would be difficult for all Mbotyi owners to do so.

Interviews suggested, however, that the pattern was changing, and becoming more individualized; Lambasi was perceived as more risky and some owners prefered to move animals in other directions. Erosion of the old-established pattern of transhumance may not be ideal for animal health, and this is compounded by declining fodder resources during winter. Maize production in the alluvial fields adjacent to the Mzimpunzi stream has largely ceased. In part this reflected a wider withdrawal from arable farming in Transkei (see Jacobson, Chapter 8, this volume); in part it was due to specific local problems. Most households have abandoned their fields and grow only limited areas of maize in gardens around their homesteads. These changes have reduced the amount of winter fodder available and may be a factor in the decline of milk supplies. As one man put it 'people are scared of milking their cattle because they think that the calves are dying, all of them, for lack of milk'.

4. Ticks and Dipping

In discussions about animal health, the issue raised most often by interviewees, sometime immediately after I had finished the introductions, was ticks and dipping. It is worth noting that Mbotyi is squarely in the geographic range of four of the worst tickborne diseases in South Africa: heartwater, carried by the bont tick; redwater, carried by the blue tick; east coast fever, carried by the brown ear tick; gallsickness, carried by the blue tick and red tick and also transferable by midges (Coetzer and Tustin, 1996)[28] .

In the early decades of the twentieth century, when livestock were assailed by a devastating epizootic of east coast fever, and ticks were identified as the vectors, the state introduced compulsory dipping – as well as restrictions on livestock movements - as the most effective method of prophylaxis. Rigorous dipping also had the effect of controlling other tickborne diseases and diminishing the number of ticks in the veld by interrupting their reproductive cycles. Small stock were dipped as a prophylaxis against scab. In the early period of enforcement, some Transkeian communities were opposed to, or at least uneasy about, dipping (Beinart, 1982; Beinart and Bundy, 1987). Dissidence persisted, especially in moment of political conflict. In Bizana, dipping tanks were attacked during the Mpondo revolt of 1960 (Interview, Mdingi). But the regime was grudgingly accepted and became part of rural life. All of the men I interviewed bemoaned the passing of compulsory, state-organised dipping.

Everyone emphasized the dangers of a tick that they called Qologqibe (or qwelagqibe – finisher of cattle).[29] Most said it was new to the area. From descriptions and observations, confirmed by the Lusikisiki veterinary office, this is almost certainly the bont tick. Although opinions differed on exactly when the bont tick made its appearance, some informants agreed that they became aware of it as a major problem in the early to mid-1990s. As one person recalled, it came

[28] Details of these diseases can be found on the web.

[29] I heard both usages and my assistant, Sonwabile Mkhanywa, said both were used, but I am a little confused about the precise derivation. The sense of the word is 'the finisher of cattle'. Ukugqiba means to finish. Qolo can mean the backbone or spine of an animal. Ukuqwela can mean to empty a cooking pot or confiscate (including an animal).

around the time of Mandela. It was almost certainly there before, but its advent as a scourge of cattle and goats is perceived to be fairly recent.

I was offered two main explanations concerning qologqibe's recent prevalence which are not mutually exclusive. Some people, such as Richard Msezwa and Sidwell Caine, associated the advent of the tick with the demise of compulsory and frequent dipping. Msezwa recalled that 'when I was a boy herding you seldom saw ticks in the veld. If you saw a tick you would get excited and call the other herdboys over. Now if you walk through grass your trousers become black with ticks'. Myalezwa Matwane remembered that the red ticks (amakalane) came back first, easily distinguishable by their large black blood sacks when dipping diminished in frequency. Qologqibe, he thought, came later from the farms (eplasini). People were buying cattle in from the farms around Kokstad or further afield in KwaZulu/Natal where they working because animals were cheaper there. Others noted that migrant workers in Gauteng would club together, purchase cheap livestock from suppliers who specialized in this trade, and then hire a van and trailer to drive them down to Pondoland. They thought that the qologqibe was brought from outside in this way.

It is also possible that the bont tick spread incrementally through both routes. Its boundaries have been mobile in the past, shaped by ecological factors and new patterns of transmission. A vet working in Port Edward believed that its range had spread in recent years. In the nineteenth century, heartwater – the disease that it carries - spread into areas of the Eastern Cape, such as around Fort Beaufort, where it had apparently been absent before, and along ox-wagon transport routes (Beinart, 2003). It was believed to come from the Transkei and Natal.

Difficulties with dipping certainly predated 1994 and the decline of dipping and imported cattle may not have been the only cause of the spread of ticks. Resistance by ticks to acaricides has been evident for some decades. For example, the blue tick was reported to have some resistance to sodium arsenite dips as early as 1938 (Whitehead, 1973). This tick also acquired some resistance to new chemicals, while retaining resistance to arsenic compounds. DDT was used for some years but ticks developed resistance to this as well. By the 1960s, other ticks, such as the brown, and the bont, were also showing at least localized resistance. Irregular dipping, as

well as inadequate mixing may have facilitated resistance (Taylor, 1995). The emergence of resistant strains is almost certainly an additional factor in the spread of ticks. Informants generally felt that when they did dip or spray, this only had limited impact, although their experience, as noted below, may in part be the result of inadequate dipping.

Dipping itself has also been irregular for many decades. East coast fever was largely eliminated by the 1950s. This was the original rationale for compulsory dipping, and there appears to have been less co-ordination in national tick control policy from then. This may be one reason why the homelands were allowed to go their own way – although there were clearly also political pressures. As early as 1960, during the revolt, dipping was suspended for some months in parts of Pondoland. People complained even at this time that the dips were insufficiently strong (Interview, Mdingi). Tim Gibbs (2009) has illustrated the subsequent decline in dipping from documentary sources. During the 1960s, when Transkei received self-government under K.D. Matanzima, control over dipping was devolved to the new Regional (Tribal) Authorities. They had to collect the dipping taxes, manage the infrastructure of tanks, and employ the dipping supervisors. By the mid-1970s, debates in the Transkeian Legislative Assembly as well as reports by the homeland Department of Agriculture revealed the growing shortage of veterinary supplies and dipping foremen, as well as organisational problems. In some coastal districts, which suffered most from ticks and tickborne diseases, dipping in the summer months became irregular. In some places, compulsory weekly dipping, and enforcement of dipping levies, remained unpopular and the chiefs tended to avoid confrontation by reducing frequency. Financial administration was poor.

Under the ANC, veterinary services were devolved to the provincial governments. In some respects this implied a centralization of dipping controls, compared to the homeland era, but still left the provision of services in the hands of provincial authorities which had many other priorities. Dipping was no longer compulsory and in the late 1990s, the state withdrew full funding for the dipping foremen and related officials. They had provided the backbone of the dipping service. These positions became ‘supernumerary’ and while they were not all sacked, many were

redeployed to other government departments, for example as school caretakers. Free dip was also withdrawn.

Government motives included cost saving and effectiveness. As explained by the vet in Lusikisiki, who has been in government service since 1993, the idea was also get livestock owners to take more responsibility for their animals and to encourage the formation of local dipping committees who would organize dipping. In the 1990s, he recalled, the government was saying 'teach a person how to fish rather than give them fish'. Government discourse, even under the populist Minister of Land Affairs and Agriculture Derek Hanekom, tended to view African owned livestock as uneconomic because so small a proportion was sold (Jacobson, in this volume). Hence major expenditure was unjustified. I do not think that the ANC government was in a simple sense neo-liberal, as many would argue, and committed to privatizing veterinary services - although this has in part been the outcome. But they were viewing a fragmented service, lack of capacity, inefficiency and other funding priorities.

While most large commercial farmers were able to make the transition to provide for themselves, this was difficult for poor communally based livestock owners. Some commercial farmers have abandoned dipping in tanks and have adopted other treatments and chemicals, such as Deadline (produced by Bayer), which is administered on the animal's spine. This was expensive, at about R420 per litre in 2009, which is enough to treat around 25-30 animals. Some livestock owners turned to spraying rather than dipping.

There have been a number of shifts in policy. After a reassessment in 1999, the state gradually became more involved in dipping again. In the Eastern Cape as a whole, agriculture has received greater priority and – at least on paper – greater state commitment in the early twenty-first century. The provincial Department of Agriculture's strategic plan for 2005-9 was a hugely ambitious document, which also recognizes that 'the department is grappling with the challenge of expanding access to veterinary public health to reach the communal areas' (Eastern Cape, Strategic Plan, 2005-2009, p.41). Dipping is one of the major elements in the government's 'six pegs policy' and a 2005 document projected 200 new tanks (Eastern Cape, 'A

People's Contract', 2005). The position in 2008-9 was that the government again provided free dip. Triatix in powder form is favoured partly because it can be easily transported and stored. There is some discussion about restoring dipping foremen.

The degree to which dipping was actually practiced depended heavily on government employees and the local dipping committees. Veterinary resources remained very stretched. There was one government vet based in Lusikisiki for four municipalities - Lusikisiki, Bizana, Flagstaff and Port St Johns. This area probably holds over 200,000 cattle, and a similar number of goats, not to mention many sheep, horses, donkeys, pigs and dogs. There has been some attempt to increase the number of animal health technicians working with communities on the ground. In Lusikisiki, they plan to appoint enough local officials so that each manages only 3 or 4 dipping tanks. Filling vacancies is a problem. However, the local officer serving Mbotyi does in fact deal with only four villages.

In some villages, dipping is reasonably effective. For example the local officer at Hombe, the large settlement close to Lusikisiki town, reported that they dip twice a week there, processing about 300 cattle on each occasion. (This is not all of the cattle in Hombe.) The local officer in charge of four tanks towards the Umzimvubu, around Mantlaneni, mentioned that two of the four were in good condition, one in poor condition, and one dysfunctional. While some dipped regularly, some in that area had not dipped by tank for three years.

Recent changes in policy have had little impact in Mbotyi because the dipping committee does not function effectively. The vets own view, certainly confirmed by the position in Mbotyi, is that dipping committees have worked very unevenly – and have often reflected political and economic divisions within communities. Dipping in Mbotyi is sporadic and most people do not get access to the tank. The men that I interviewed were uniformly in favour of dipping as a means of control of ticks but generally of the opinion that the dipping committee did not work for them. There were a variety of problems. Some of these related to the control of the dipping committee, essentially by those associated with the headman.[30] Although dip is

[30] The population of Mbotyi is very mixed but the headman's clan,,called the AmaNdovelana, is long established in the area. In the homeland era, this was part of the Emtweni Tribal Authority of which the

supposedly free, it is only available at the offices in Lusikisiki, about 30 km away from Mbotyi, and must be collected by an accredited member of the dipping committee. In recent years, the committee had made a charge for the collection, for the organization of dipping and for much-needed maintenance of the dipping tank. In fact the Mbotyi tank is damaged and requires major repairs. If dipping is to be effective, the tank has to be emptied or pumped out regularly, and each new batch of dip mixed with clean water. (Muddy and dirty water is a major reason for ineffectiveness of dipping.)

People alleged that they had contributed money but that the committee had not provided the required services. Corruption was alleged. There was thus a standoff: cattle-owners refused to pay more money and the committee refused to organize dipping for them till they paid. Informants said that the associates of the headman had effectively monopolized what should have been a community initiative. They said that he did still sometimes collect dip but used most of the dip for his own substantial herd. There were some other major issues between the headman and his immediate supporters, on the one hand, and the people on the side of the village where I was largely interviewing – for example employment at the hotel, and benefits from the campsite adjacent to the hotel. (The lines of division are not precisely the same on all issues.)

The headman and his main adviser, in turn, were adamant that the Department did not provide dip in sufficient quantities. They said that there was a chronic shortage of dip at the Agricultural offices. In February 2009, the local animal health officer confirmed that there was not, at that moment, dip available in Lusikisiki for his area at least.

Clearly this is an issue on which different views are held and on which feelings run high. It is intriguing that dipping remains at the heart of village politics – at least for the livestock owners and the older men. In 2009, the problem appeared intractable despite offers by the hotel owners to help pump out and repair the dipping tank.

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recognised government appointed chief was from the Gingqi clan. So the headman was not strictly speaking a chief.

The local animal health officer is based in another village, which is more organized. He was cautious about getting involved.

As a result of these financial and political/administrative problems, most livestock owners in Mbotyi had to fend for themselves. Most used pump sprays. They purchased dip from town either at the chemist or from a retail agricultural supply shop. They also purchase 'nips' of dip. The term derives from a small 200ml bottle of brandy. Informal retailers visit on pension day in bakkies or set up stall in Lusikisiki town. They get hold of large quantities of dip at wholesale prices, divide it into unmarked bottles, and sell it off as nips at a high mark up. It is possible that some are able to get access to free government dip. Some chemicals may be time expired and some diluted. (The veterinary officers are aware of this and recognize that unlabeled products and incorrect dosages may be a major problem, but they have not tested the nips.)

Like so many commodities in isolated rural villages, costs are often higher than in urban centres, because people can only afford to buy small quantities and middlemen take such a big cut. The nips are diluted and used as a spray. Cattle owners were reasonably enthusiastic about them, suggesting that it was 'strong' but it did not kill all the ticks. Certainly some perceive it to be as effective as dipping. But livestock owners neither spray nor dip sufficiently often to control the reproductive of ticks.

Some owners used other products such Deadline, and Redline, on an irregular basis when they could afford them. A few wealthier owners used aerosol sprays such as Supona which is effective against ticks in body parts that are difficult to clear by dip or spray, such as the ears of cattle and horses, or the hooves of goats. Others use a cheaper form of wound oil. Most of my informants could not read English, and usage instructions on purchased chemicals are generally in English only. They were dependent on finding someone to assist, or on word of mouth, or simply trial and error. The evidence from interviews suggests that dipping has become less effective and more expensive in Mbotyi.

5. The Impact of Ticks and Perceptions of Tick-borne Diseases

Ticks have two major effects on livestock. Firstly, they create itching, external wounds, and 'tick worry'. These can have severe consequences. Secondly, they carry serious diseases. External damage is recognized by all. With respect to diseases, I was surprised to find that after nearly a century of dipping in Pondoland, the group of livestock owners whom I interviewed did not directly associate ticks with diseases. They know, and have words and treatments for, gallsickness, redwater, and heartwater. But they do not associate them directly with ticks in general, nor specific ticks.

When this connection did not emerge from interviews, I asked people directly. Nongede Mkhanywa, who is a sangoma, and knowledgeable about plants and treatments, said: 'the ticks suck the blood from animals and they die; there is no particular disease that causes death but they suck the blood. The ticks also go to the ears, and bite on the testes, and flies come and lay their eggs in the wound which goes rotten and causes death'. Myalezwa Matwana, whom I interviewed a number of times, is recognized by most of the older men as a specialist on livestock diseases. He affirmed that in large numbers, ticks were a major problem because they 'kill the cattle by sucking the blood' (sela igazi) – they 'finish the blood' (iphela igazi). He knew symptoms for individual diseases, and he noted that the flesh of cows that seemed to die from tick infestation could be grayish (ingwevu – meaning the colour and also an old grey-haired person) because the ticks had finished the blood. (Severe tick infestation can cause anaemia.) In some cases the meat was so unpleasant (imbi) that they fed it to dogs. But he insisted when we discussed this in more detail that the causes of the diseases that are generally recognized by scientists as tickborne, were seasonal and environmental.

In Mbotyi, at least, such understandings also affected attitudes to dipping. The interviews suggested strongly that livestock owners had not internalized the logic of regular dipping, despite the long history of this practice. The Department recommends weekly dipping during summer and fortnightly during winter. It was clear that even the headman was not dipping so frequently – he mentioned about once a month when government dip was available. Generally people dipped to get

rid of ticks, and they judged the effectiveness of dips by the speed with which ticks were killed. They did not articulate an understanding of the importance of regular dipping in order to break the life cycle of ticks or the transmission of tick-borne diseases.

The impact of ticks was highly visible on cattle and horses. Although there were not a large number of cattle in the village during either of my visits, most of the small herds that I saw were infested with ticks. These clustered around the ears, the anus, the udder of cows and the soft flesh in between, but they could be seen elsewhere. The ears were perhaps worst affected by brown ticks although bont ticks could also embed themselves there. They cause bleeding and in a number of cases, the ears of cattle were partly or wholly eaten away. Walking behind cattle, you could see a cluster of ticks around their anus, and hindquarters, many swollen with blood so that they looked like a coating of drooping red-black pendants. The ears of a few horses were badly infested and drooped – I was told that this was because the ticks had destroyed the blood vessels that enabled the horses' ears to stand erect. Ticks crept into the skin below the manes, and some manes were cropped close to the body, so that they could be better treated.

Informants were clear that the qologqibe tick, while by no means the only one to infest their cattle, was different. It bit deeper and went through the hide of the cattle. It could not be removed. When the blood sack fell off the head remained embedded. It caused open sores which would not heal and in which flies then laid maggots. These, one man thought, crawled into the orifices and killed the livestock. When they bit into udders, they caused scabs which closed the teats so that calves could not feed nor could the cattle be milked. In one case, a cow was slaughtered because its urinary tract had been closed by ticks. Calves were especially suspectible to the bont tick and they were also disadvantaged because of this difficulty in feeding. Qologqibe bit in between the hooves of goats, and were very difficult to kill or extract from there by dipping or spraying. They caused lameness and disease.

Some informants mentioned that the dip available from the government was insufficiently strong. (The English word 'strong' is widely used.) The partial ineffectiveness of Triatix has also been noted in a study by Moyo and Masika (2009).

The idea seemed prevalent that the effectiveness of dipping could be judged by the extent to which dip would kill the ticks at one shot, and the extent to which they dropped off after dipping. It may be that I did not ask sufficiently often, or find a way to ask effectively, but my informants did not seem to have significant knowledge about the life cycle of ticks. One of the benefits of frequent, regular dipping in earlier years was not only that it controlled diseases, but that it broke the reproductive cycle of ticks and diminished the number of ticks overall. It may be that resistance by ticks has partly negated the value of this strategy. Nevertheless, most people accepted that ticks could be reduced, if not totally eliminated, by effective treatment and a few herds, which were more carefully managed, carried noticeably fewer ticks.

It is unfortunate that natural controls over ticks have also diminished. I saw no red-billed oxpeckers or cattle egrets, both of which feed on ticks on cattle; informants confirmed that they were no longer many around and it seems that they have been destroyed by poisoning. The ox-peckers are making a come back in and around some national parks and wildlife farming areas, and are being deliberately bred and encouraged in a few projects on privately owned livestock farms. Clearly dipping over the long term has eradicated these birds, but it should not be assumed that there was a balance beforehand. Tickborne epizootics such as redwater (1870s and 1880s) and east coast fever (c.1904-1915) were devastating before the introduction of dipping; heartwater could also reach epizootic proportions in some areas. We know from nineteenth century sources that ticks were common in the Eastern Cape, and at best the birds may have mitigated 'tick worry'.

In sum, even if the committee and community organized themselves more effectively and free dip was available in sufficient quantities, it is unlikely that they would reinstate weekly dipping. (This is not impossible. With the assistance of a young and motivated animal health technician, it seems that weekly dipping is being provided for some livestock owners at Hombe.) Livestock owners did not generally accept the value of such regularity. Yet without weekly summer dipping, there is very little chance of diminishing tick infestations. There are other disincentives to frequent dipping during the summer - notably that many of the cattle are kept some distance away from the village, and are difficult to round up and return on a regular

basis. This would be demanding for the older men, and herdboys are not generally available to them.

Although local people have herbal medicines for a number of different animal diseases, including some for diseases such as gallsickness, they do not have any treatment for ticks. Informants suggested that they had never had an effective local treatment for ticks and particularly not for the bont tick. This is somewhat surprising, in that the area has long been susceptible to ticks. However, it may be that compulsory and universal dipping was in place for so long, since the 1910s, that the memory of remedies used before has faded. Myalezwa hinted at this: 'I never learnt medicines for ticks. Maybe it was because ticks were cured (aphela) by dipping. We were dipping often at that time'. Moyo and Masika (2009) note that a small number of livestock owners (7 per cent) use herbal mixes in sprays for tick control in a coastal district, Centani, in the southern Transkei. Khoikhoi people used smoke. There are treatments, aside from registered biomedicines, for tick wounds. Mathubula, or Jeyes fluid mixed with paraffin, which helps it to penetrate, was used for infected tick wounds.[31] Informants recognized that it could damage animals.

Qologqibe was occasionally associated with the machinations of white people. People say that whites want us to go and buy everything', Myalezwa commented, and therefore introduced this new tick: 'we like to slaughter our own cattle but white people are too clever and we can no longer have our own things'. As a commentary on the broader process of incorporation over the long term there may be some salience in this view. But it is ironic that the white government actually enforced compulsory dipping which controlled ticks. Black governments, first in the homeland era, and then since 1994, while by no means entirely responsible, helped to create the conditions for the resurgence of ticks.

[31] The word comes I think from ukuthubula, which means to remove hair from an animal skin – which might indicate that this solution can damage animals. I was told that paraffin used on teats or other exposed parts of cows did cause damage.

6. Some concluding comments

Resurgence of ticks has very likely increased the death rate, and the slaughter rate, of livestock. Certainly informants perceived this to be the case, although there is no reliable quantitative information available. Higher rates of turnover are not necessarily without benefits. At least when livestock are damaged by tick worry, they can be slaughtered and eaten before they die. The scale of tick infestation may be related to the frequency of slaughter. Many commentators on African strategies towards livestock management have bemoaned the lack of turnover through sales. Local sales for the purposes of slaughter, or slaughter by owners, may well be increasing in frequency.

The incidence and impact of tickborne diseases is more complex to analyse and is not attempted here. Local livestock almost certainly have a degree of immunity to some of the tickborne diseases, which, given the ubiquity of ticks on animals, are less destructive than might be expected. All informants agreed that animals brought from outside were far more susceptible to disease than local animals, and many succumbed quickly. I will be exploring this issue, as well as local treatments, elsewhere.

There may be hidden environmental benefits from the partial demise of dipping. The tank is close to the Mbotyi river and part of the dipping solution found its way downstream and into the picturesque lagoon. During rainy season, the lagoon is full and flushed out regularly, but less so during the dry season. (However, chemicals are now kept and used around the homesteads.)

There may also be environmental benefits in the gradual reduction, over the long term, in the number of livestock. My approach may differ from some of the other contributors to this volume. But we should not assume that large quantities of livestock in this environmentally sensitive area are without environmental impacts. The coastal zone between Umgazana, south of Port St Johns, and Lambasi has one of the largest surviving areas of natural forest in South Africa. Some of the grasslands are also highly biodiverse. External agencies have a role in conserving these resources. The forests around Mbotyi may no longer be contracting but they

are affected by the plantations and sawmills at Ntusbane, they are cut through with livestock paths and, at least around their edges, assailed by invasive species. In the context of relatively stable livestock numbers and possibly declining cultivation, there is clearly scope for discussion and common approaches between state conservation agencies, environmentalists, and local communities.

Yet all informants perceived there to be a crisis in animal health and management. In part this related to social problems such as the shortage of labour for herding, perceived increase in theft, decline in cultivation, and conflicts over the dipping committee. In part, it resulted from complex and interconnected changes in environment and disease patterns. Most called for more effective government intervention, rather than less intervention. Most were clear that they had no remedy for the resurgence of ticks. They saw these aspects of environmental and disease management as the province of the state.

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8

The Mismatch between Smallholder Realities and Agricultural Development Interventions: from 'Betterment' to the Massive Food Production Programme

Klara Jacobson

Traditional farming in Pondoland (picture : J. Dellier, 2009)

1. Introduction

South Africa has a long history of development programmes and agricultural interventions targeting poor rural smallholders. While smallholder agriculture[32] in

[32] Throughout this text, several examples are given where what is referred to as smallholder agriculture is contrasted with, and seen as inferior to, what is referred to as commercial agriculture. Smallholder

the past has been much truncated by political and economic interventions implemented by apartheid and colonial governments (Hendricks, 1990; Bryceson, 2004), since democratisation the South African government has shown a strong will to overcome the deep marginalisation of the black community (Du Toit, 2008). This will has been expressed in the form of numerous development initiatives (du Toit, 2008) of which the Massive Food Production Programme (MFPP), initiated in 2002 by the Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture (ECDA), is one (Damgaard Hansen, 2006).

Eastern Cape, which is a largely rural province comprising the two former homelands Ciskei and Transkei, is today recognised as being one of the poorest provinces in South Africa. Poverty is estimated to have increased since democratisation (Bank and Minkley, 2005). At the same time as possibilities for urban employment have decreased greatly (Bryceson, 2004), many smallholder fields in the region today lie unused (Andrew and Fox, 2004; Mfono, 2008; see also data presented later in this chapter).

This chapter describes how smallholder agriculture and agricultural 'development'[33] have been perceived within various agricultural development initiatives from colonial times to the current MFPP. Data from three villages in the former Transkei partaking in the MFPP as well as MFPP documentation and interviews with the ECDA officials in charge of the programme are presented and discussed in relation to previous development initiatives. The results highlight how (mis)understandings of local livelihoods and agriculture similar to those that have influenced previous development initiatives are repeated in the current MFPP and have affected the

agriculture here refers to agriculture commonly practised on a small scale, being largely non-commercial, using few external inputs, commonly planting a variety of crops and being practised as a part-time occupation. The 'commercial agriculture' with which this is contrasted in the MFPP and other development initiatives presented here is commonly understood in these development initiatives to be large-scale rationalised farming with more mechanisation and chemical inputs to secure larger quantities of outputs in the form of one crop. To introduce 'commercial agriculture' into smallholder farming in this context hence not only means connecting smallholder agriculture with the external market, but also introducing all the features connected with what is seen as the 'modern' type of agriculture, including modern technologies, hybrid seeds and chemicals.

[33] For a discussion about ideas on development, see the next section on (Neo-)colonial representations of Africans, land and development.

potential of the MFPP to provide agricultural development and reduce poverty in the Eastern Cape.

The text builds on initial analyses from research carried out within a PhD project studying the effects of the MFPP on local livelihoods and agricultural practices in three villages in the Eastern Pondoland region of Eastern Cape, South Africa. While the main focus of the PhD thesis is on how the MFPP has been implemented and understood at the village level and how it has affected local livelihoods and farming, this chapter mainly focuses on how local agricultural practices are perceived and handled within agricultural development programmes in the region leading up to and including the MFPP.

2. (Neo-)colonial representations of Africans, land and development

The idea of the Western world being more advanced than other societies spread during the Enlightenment age in Europe (Hall, 1992). Following this line of thinking, African culture and practices have through history often been described as being far inferior to the European (Adams and McShane, 1996; Eriksson Baaz, 2001). This evolutionary understanding of development, with what is seen as traditionally African culture and practices representing a lower developmental stage, has unfortunately been shown to persist in current development thinking, where Africans are still perceived as passive receivers of development interventions (Mbembe, 2001; Eriksson Baaz, 2002).

Development theory, emerging after the Second World War with the intention of providing an understanding of how the colonies could develop productively as decolonisation approached (Arce and Long, 2000; Escobar, 2008; Leys, 2008) has followed in this train of thought and development has come to mean paving the way for the underdeveloped Third World to achieve the same standard as the rich, civilized societies; the underlying idea being that copying the characteristics of the rich world, such as industrialisation, agricultural modernisation and urbanisation, would create better lives in the Third World (Escobar, 2008). A central theme for development of the 'underdeveloped' has been to eradicate what has been seen as

traditional and therefore inhibitory to the modernisation project (Arce and Long, 2000). Within this frame of reference, smallholder agriculture has commonly been understood as traditional and therefore inferior to the 'modern' industrial and commercialised agriculture practised in the West (see also footnote 1). The usefulness of smallholder agriculture for providing household security, when practised as a part-time activity with little use of external inputs and low or no connection to the external market (Netting, 1993; Ellis, 2000), cannot be acknowledged within this frame of reference.

The World Development Report 'Agriculture for Development' (World Bank, 2007) is a prime example of how the modernisation project still dominates Western development thinking (McMichael, 2009). In its application of an evolutionary perspective to agricultural development (Scoones, 2009), it presents a strong conviction that large-scale commercial agriculture, being more advanced than smallholder farming, is the recipe for reducing rural poverty in developing countries (Havnevik et al., 2007; see also footnote 1). Scoones (2009) argues that when this evolutionary narrative of development is so strongly presented by an institution as dominant as the World Bank, it carries with it consequences for the general understanding of development.

Following the dominant understanding of development presented above, the low contribution of agriculture to local livelihoods in the former homelands has often been interpreted by development initiatives and by many South Africans in general (Maddox, 2002) as stemming from local people not wanting to, or not having the knowledge to, practise agriculture in an efficient manner (see e.g. Ellis-Jones, 1984). Similar explanations have been given for various forms of land use in the former homelands, where local practices have often been misunderstood by authorities and the way local resources are used has not been put in the larger context (cf. Beinart, 2002; Kepe, 2005).

Bank and Minkley (2005) show how the current debate on development in the Eastern Cape contrasts (unsustainable) subsistence agriculture with sustainable (high input, industrial) agriculture. The authors refer to the provincial minister of agriculture in the Eastern Cape at that time, who in his budget speech for 2003-04

referred to resource-limited farmers as an environmental threat and recommended getting abandoned land in the former homelands into 'productive' use. Similarly, Ainslie (2002) shows how a dualist perception still dominates the official understanding of livestock production, where what is seen as 'productive' and commercially orientated livestock herding in the former white areas of the Eastern Cape is contrasted with the 'unproductive' subsistence rearing of livestock in the communal areas in the former homelands, despite a lack of actual knowledge of communal livestock production. Gran (2009) shows that the dualist thinking also remains on a national scale, as current ANC policies directed at improving the life of the previously oppressed South African majority have prioritised industrial, market-orientated agriculture over smallholder agriculture, seeing the former as the only viable option for development.

Development theory rooted in the evolutionary view of development as presented above has been criticised in a large body of literature (Escobar, 1995; Hornborg, 2001; van Binsbergen et al., 2004; Gunder Frank, 2007; Odum, 2007; Edelman and Haugerud, 2008), where authors convincingly argue from different theoretical standpoints that what are seen as traditional practices are not at all static, since local traditions and practices change by locals actively adapting or rejecting various changes, and also that it is impossible to discuss development without considering global power relations and the unfair distribution of, and access to, resources. Research within the natural sciences has highlighted this unfair distribution pattern (Brown, 2003) and pointed to the impossibility of all farming developing along the lines of today's Western industrial farming, simply due to the future lack of access to non-renewable resources that have been the building blocks of the Western world's agricultural revolution (Rydberg and Haden, 2006; Odum, 2007).

3. Previous agricultural development programmes in the former homelands

As discussed later in this chapter, colonial and apartheid policies had major negative effects on the possibility for South African smallholders to practise farming and attempts have been made to redress this in a number of development initiatives.

The 'betterment' schemes, as the villagisation schemes were called in South Africa, were major social engineering schemes implemented by both South African and homeland governments, starting in the 1930s (Bernstein, 1997; Fay, 2003). The schemes were introduced to combat what were seen as acute problems of environmental degradation and overcrowding (Bernstein, 1997). Rather than considering that too many people were actually dependent on too little land without sufficient means to practise farming and without access to sufficient alternative livelihood strategies (cf. Hendricks, 1990), rural areas were sometimes completely reorganised with the motivation that it was the local organisation that was causing the environmental and social constraints (de Wet, 1990; Beinart, 2002).

Smallholders were not passive receivers of betterment, since in many areas the reorganisations were never fully implemented due to local rejection (Beinart, 2002; Fay, 2003). At the same time, where restructuring of residential areas, arable and grazing land occurred, it did not manage to increase agricultural productivity and several authors have shown how the schemes had negative effects environmentally, as well as socially and economically (De Wet, 1990; Beinart, 1992; McAllister, 1992). Hendricks (1990) presents convincing evidence of how the numerous development schemes under betterment had no possibilities to increase productivity and limit erosion in the reserves, since the land designated for the black population was far too limited to allow the creation of self-sufficient farmers. Rather, the schemes have been accused of having the underlying intention of better controlling the rural population (Hendricks, 1990; Beinart, 2002). The schemes clearly display an underlying attitude that the implementers know better than the local people how to organise village life to provide for productive farming, while it has been shown repeatedly how local conditions clearly were not understood or acknowledged. For example, the new allocation of agricultural land often meant a need for major investment by the smallholder to start up farming in an uncultivated area, while in the reorganisation many households lost their previous large gardens that they relied on to a great extent, as labour migration to cities had limited the labour available in the villages for cultivating larger and more distant fields (McAllister, 1992).

Like the development schemes introduced by the colonial and apartheid administrations, the development schemes by the Transkei government have been criticised for their perceived lack of understanding of local livelihoods. The maize programmes pursued during the time of Transkei independence, such as the ploughing schemes by Transkei Agricultural Corporation (TRACOR) during the 1980s (Ellis-Jones, 1984), have been criticised for their top-down implementation, causing erosion of local practices and of land (De Wet, 1990). The work by TRACOR in the Transkei aimed to replace smallholder practices with commercial farming techniques, mechanisation and hybrid seeds, the aim being to increase agricultural production. Reasons for local farming practices were ignored; intercropping in the fields was banned and smallholders were not allowed to pick 'green mealies' (unripe maize, an important contribution to the diet in many households for several months before the final harvest). Furthermore, local farmers were not involved in learning the new techniques introduced by TRACOR, as the TRACOR employees did virtually everything from planting to harvesting (De Wet, 1990).

Another example where similar ideas of agricultural development are presented is the Transkei agricultural development study, as discussed by McAllister (1992). The study was a policy document released in 1991 from the Transkei government regarding the future of farming in the region. The baseline for the study was that smallholder agriculture in the way it was practised in the Transkei prevented development and created soil erosion. Establishment of commercial farming was hence seen as a key step in achieving successful development. While the study acknowledged that previous top-down interventions had not worked, it proposed a number of general land reforms for Transkei to reduce common access to land and increase state control with the intention of enabling the development of a viable farming industry. Those smallholders interested in farming on a larger scale would be allowed to do so at the expense of others who were not seen as using their land productively and who would therefore have it taken from them (McAllister, 1992).

4. The Massive Food Production Programme, MFPP

The MFPP is both a continuation of, and a reaction to, previous development programmes in the Eastern Cape region. Similarly to previous interventions, it aims to target local conditions of poverty and environmental degradation and what is seen as 'underproductive' agriculture by introducing 'modern' agricultural techniques (ECDA, unknown a), and again the scheme was planned without any consultation with, or input from, local farmers.

The ECDA emphasises that the welfare and quality of life of people of the Eastern Cape are inextricably linked to the economic activity and food production generated by the agricultural sector (ECDA, 2003; ECDA, 2004a). It is estimated that the province, which is currently a net importer of maize, should be able to increase its production tenfold and thereby become self-sufficient, while still being ecologically sustainable (ECDA, unknown a). This will be achieved by greatly increasing the use of external resources such as chemical fertilisers, mechanisation, hybrid seeds and pesticides. The objectives of the programme are stated slightly differently in different documents, but all contain the same core aims: food security, the commercialisation of agriculture and sustainable cropping practices (ECDA, 2003; ECDA, 2004a; ECDA 2004b).

Box n°8.1 : Objectives of the MFPP as presented on the website of the Eastern Cape Department of Agriculture (ECDA [on-line])[34]

- Food security - commercial field crop production to address local and provincial food needs.
- Poverty alleviation and rural economic development through the establishment of competent and economically sustainable crop farmers.
- Conservation Cropping Practices - progressively establish the general use of conservation field cropping practices that optimise the sustainable and profitable use of arable areas including the practice of minimum tillage.

[34] ECDA [on-line] : http://www.agr.ecprov.gov.za/index.php?module=sd_programmes&id=3 (visited 2009-05-22).

The MFPP targets individual emerging farmers[35] and communities. The main criteria for taking part are that the land should be of good quality with sufficient rainfall, that areas of a minimum block of 50 hectares can be grouped together and that fields are fenced (ECDA, 2004b; ECDA, unknown b). Farmers or communities interested in participating have to apply to the local agricultural offices and if accepted, participants are required to enter into a conditional grant contract with the Department of Agriculture (ECDA, 2005).

The conditional grant scheme is a central tool of the MFPP for stimulating smallholders to take responsibility over their farming and learn to become commercially orientated farmers (ECDA 2004a; ECDA, unknown a; ECDA unknown b). The aim of making farmers take responsibility is based on the idea that previous interventions have failed, largely because they only provided aid without asking for anything in return, and by that created a 'dependency syndrome' where local smallholders do not take responsibility for their own situation but expect the state to solve their local problems (Damgaard Hansen, 2006; Coordinator of technology development MFPP, pers. comm. 2008). The grants from the MFPP were planned to be provided on a decreasing basis over four years, with the idea that by the end of the programme, smallholders should be able to practise commercially orientated farming without the need for external finance (ECDA, unknown b).

The MFPP positions itself as something different from the previous maize production schemes (such as those implemented by Transkei Agricultural Corporation, TRACOR) in that it does not intend to turn local people into mere employees on their own land. The scheme rather proposes to empower smallholders and it is stated that it expects a great deal of local initiative and responsibility (Damgaard Hansen, 2006). At the same time, the programme follows previous programmes in that it is a typically top-down implemented scheme (General Manager Technical Services ECDA, pers. comm., 2008) with negligible possibilities for local smallholders to affect the way it is implemented.

[35] The term 'emerging farmers' is used for previously marginalised smallholders who in the process of land redistribution have gained access to a larger piece of land with the intention that they should become established as commercial farmers.

A common theme running from the betterment programme to the current MFPP has been the focus on solving the local problems of unproductive agriculture and land degradation by proposing changes in the local setting and by contrasting commercial ('modern') agriculture with smallholder agriculture; favouring the former and showing very little understanding for the local use of the latter. However, as is discussed in the next section, in the case of the former homelands it is important to understand that the local situation is never completely controlled by the local people (Goldman, 1998) but has to be put in a larger context (Dahlberg, 1994; McCay, 2002; Robbins, 2004). As discussed below, colonial and apartheid policies created a situation in the homelands where the possibilities for agriculture to serve as a main livelihood were severely limited (Hendricks, 1990). Local smallholders have therefore practised farming in whatever way possible considering the limitations imposed upon them.

5. Local livelihoods and the role of agriculture in the former homelands

While the structural adjustment conditionality of the 1980s implemented by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in developing countries and the following liberalisation of markets have played an important role in reducing the viability of smallholder agriculture in many sub-Saharan countries (Bryceson, 2004; Havnevik *et al.*, 2007), previous interventions were more important in reducing the viability of rural smallholder agriculture in South Africa (Bryceson, 2004). Noteworthy among these are a series of political and economic interventions targeting the black population, including restrictions on movement and reduced access to land, which have affected land use practices by the rural black population since colonial times in South Africa (Hendricks, 1990; McAllister, 1992; Bernstein, 1997; Nel and Davies, 1999; Bryceson, 2004).

While rural people actively worked to adapt their agricultural practices to cope with these policies (McAllister, 1992; Andrew and Fox, 2004), from the 1940s onwards labour migration increased markedly and, with a large proportion of the able-bodied workforce leaving, agricultural production dropped in the homelands (McAllister, 1992). Hendricks (1990) shows convincingly how the colonial system and, even more

so, the apartheid administration systematically undermined the possibilities for black South Africans to make a living in rural areas. While *'Africans were not to be self-sufficient nor surplus producing peasants, and certainly not capitalist farmers'* (Hendricks, 1990 pp. 158), they were at the same time prevented from making a living in urban areas since wages were kept below subsistence level and families were not allowed to move with the workers into towns. A link of dependency was hence created between labour migration and agriculture in the homelands, where neither migrant labour nor agriculture alone could provide a livelihood for rural families. Despite the actual impossibility of earning a living from the little land allocated, colonial and apartheid policies methodically worked to create a false feeling of the homelands being the home for Africans, preventing them looking for solutions to their deprivation outside their designated areas. Repeated development schemes in the homelands strengthened and worked within this narrative, with what was argued to be local overstocking of cattle and detrimental land use practices being targeted with the official aim of improving local conditions, while the actual causes of deprivation were continuously concealed (Hendricks, 1990).

Current research indicates that agriculture in the former homelands today provides on average a very small part of rural livelihoods. Hajdu (2006 and see Chapter 6, this volume) has estimated in her extensive research in two villages in the Eastern Pondoland region that despite most households planting their (approximately 1 ha) fields, agriculture only provides on average 3% of household income. Similarly, a study of rural poverty in the Eastern Cape by Mfono *et al.* (2008) based on secondary data shows agriculture's contribution to local household income to be almost negligible. However, as is also recognised by Hajdu, simply putting a monetary value on subsistence agriculture ignores other roles of agriculture that are not easily converted to monetary value, such as the food security and buffer it provides for poor households as a complement to other livelihood strategies.

Despite the history of interventions undermining the possibilities for local production, smallholder agriculture has often remained an important part of rural livelihoods (McAllister, 2000; Andrew and Fox, 2004). Andrew and Fox (2004) argue on the basis of case study evidence from the Transkeian coast that unused fields do not mean that people do not engage in agriculture. In their case study, they show

that intensified garden cultivation has been a strategy to allow poor households to continue working the land in the face of shrinking resources. In addition, while farming is not important for all households, research has shown that smallholder farming in the former homelands often has a cyclical character (McAllister, 1992; see Hajdu, Chapter 6, this volume as well as findings from this PhD work presented below). While seldom being of main importance for young households, who tend to look for paid employment as a main source of income, farming is taken up as more of a full-time occupation by older people who are no longer engaged in paid work and who have established the necessary economic base for farming. During their time in paid employment, household members commonly invest in the rural homestead as future security. This investment, in cattle and other resources, can later provide the necessary base for taking up farming. A field lying unused therefore does not mean that there is not an intention to use this field when household circumstances change.

6. Description of the study area

The study area for this project was Xopozo, a group of several villages that have taken part in the MFPP. The villages are situated in the former Transkei, in the area commonly known as Eastern Pondoland, which, in contrast to many other areas in the former homelands, is historically known for its agricultural productivity (Hendricks, 1990). Xopozo belongs to Ingquza Hill municipal area in OR Tambo District Municipality (Ingquza Hill Local Municipality, 2007). Flagstaff is the nearest urban centre and Xopozo is situated roughly 10 kilometres north of Flagstaff, with the Mzintlava river providing the border towards Ntabankulu in the west. It takes about forty minutes in a local taxi from Flagstaff to get to Xopozo, the majority of the way being a dirt road off the R61.

Xopozo is a group of several villages under the same chief. Although more villages belong to the same chieftaincy, a group of five villages that are located together on the same road are somewhat more closely integrated with each other and these are the villages that took part in the MFPP. The focus of the PhD work was on three of these villages, comprising a total of 266 households. The villages have not yet (2009)

got electricity, sanitation or running water. However, they have a fairly recently renovated clinic and a couple of schools, including one high school. Apart from these schools, the clinic, a couple of *spaza* shops and local taxis, there are few, if any, local employment possibilities. Due to the poor quality of the road and lack of regular transport possibilities, it would not be easy to maintain a job in Flagstaff and live in Xopozo.

The villages in the study were affected by betterment planning in the 1960s and houses are mainly located close together along the main road and paths off the main road. Every household has a site for a small garden next to it and fields and grazing lands are located outside the residential area. Most households have a field of about one hectare. The distance from the household to the field varies from a couple of hundred metres to several kilometres. The majority of fields are located within designated field areas that were fenced off during the betterment programme, although today many fences are old and poorly maintained. Some new households have recently been allocated new fields on land previously used as grazing land. These fields are no more than a quarter of a hectare.

Xopozo entered into the MFPP during the planting season 2003/2004 and left the programme in 2008. Due to incomplete plantings during some years in the programme, a stock of remaining seeds was kept by the chief and many households were supplied with seeds from the chief during the planting season 2008/2009 too. Based on data from the planting season 2007/2008, about half the fields in Xopozo were planted. Field visits during 2009 indicate that the field area planted that year might be slightly less.

7. Data collection and analysis

This chapter presents a selection of data collected during fieldwork for the PhD, such as:

- Information from household surveys, notes and observations from field work in three villages (266 households) in Xopozo during 2006, 2008 and 2009.

- Interviews with the coordinator of technology development for the MFPP, who was the person in charge of designing the MFPP, the administrative head of the MFPP and one mentor for the participants in the MFPP.
- ECDA documents from the planning and implementation of the MFPP.

The majority of these data were collected between January and May 2008, when the author spent between two to seven days per week living with a family in Xopozo. The first half of the field work during 2008 consisted of exercises to gain a good baseline understanding of local livelihoods in Xopozo in general and farming in particular. Short informal interviews and informal talks with residents, participant observation, participatory mapping and participatory social ranking exercises of all households were the main activities carried out. After this, data collection focused on household surveys with all 266 households and in-depth semi-structured interviews with 11 households selected to represent the variety in the village regarding farming engagement and wealth. The majority of the data collection in the village was carried out with the aid of two local interpreters, Nomahlubi Mnukwa and Thoebelani Fuzile, who also served as assistants and after initial training carried out many of the household surveys independently.

The majority of the interviews with officials at the ECDA were carried out by two Swedish undergraduate students, Anna Nilsson and Hanna Karlsson, supervised by the author. These students also assisted in collecting documents from the ECDA regarding planning and implementation of the MFPP. A total of eight interviews were conducted with people involved in MFPP planning and implementation from provincial to local level, of which the two most engaged in the original planning of the MFPP and one mentor with knowledge in the specific field area are drawn upon in this chapter. Some additional data at village level and with ECDA officials were gathered by the author and colleagues during 2009. The chief of Xopozo was interviewed on several occasions in all three years.

All in-depth interviews with households and with people involved in the planning and implementation of the MFPP were transcribed and are currently being analysed using Atlas.ti software. Household surveys were analysed using the SPSS statistical analysis and data management programme. Informal interviews, field diary entries

and notes from village meetings, field walks, etc. were used as a complement to the recorded interviews and household surveys.

8. Local livelihoods and agricultural engagement in Xopozo

Data from the household surveys show that the vast majority of households support themselves through a truly diverse portfolio of activities. Neither monetary income nor farming clearly dominates as the subsistence strategy. Although most households (94%) have some form of monetary income (including all monetary inputs to the household, from selling a couple of bags of maize every year to having regular employment), for the majority of households such income is too small to provide a living. The average household size is five members, including three children[36] and 75% of all households have less than 1470 rand/month as monetary income. Fourteen households (5.6%) reported no monetary income at all. However, it became clear from the in-depth interviews and participatory observation that even the households that reported no monetary income in the survey have some means of getting money for the household at times, normally by performing small services to others in the village such as collecting firewood or weeding. The small monetary contributions that such work provides are seldom counted as income by the household, but rather as a type of emergency measure that just provides the money necessary for the moment, for example for doctor's fees. Nevertheless, especially to the families classed as very poor, such small irregular amounts of income are often an essential means of survival.

Social welfare benefits, most commonly pensions and child benefits, are the most common monetary input to the households. As both the size and the variety of social welfare benefits have increased during recent years, they have clearly increased the availability of money in the village. These are paid on a monthly basis. Of all households surveyed, 83% reported receiving some form of monthly benefits payment, compared with only 42% of households reporting regular income from

[36] The fact that the average family consists of two adults and three children does not mean that the average family comprises the husband and wife and their children. This is a rather unusual family composition in the village. The average family of five might instead commonly be composed of grandparents and grandchildren, children from a relative who lives somewhere else or is ill, etc.

work or business. On average, social benefits payments also provide a greater amount of money to households (mean 985 rand per month) than income from business or work (mean 752 rand per month). While providing very little or no income to many households, work provides a major monetary input in a few households. One extreme case was a single man who earned 12 950 rand/month through his local businesses (a taxi and a *spaza* shop).

It is noteworthy that money is not the sole indicator of wealth or security for families in the village. Of the 14 households that reported no monetary income, two were nevertheless classed as rich by the village members during the social ranking exercise. The importance of alliances for providing social and economic security extending beyond the household partly explain this, as does the dynamic character of the household. Reciprocal alliances often provide benefits that are not counted in monetary terms and that make it possible for the household to retain a certain level of wealth and security without using money. These alliances take many forms:

- a household with no field can help out during the harvest in the field of another household and receive some of the maize yield in exchange;
- some households are organised in cooperative work groups where they pool cattle, farming equipment and labour and help each other around the more labour intensive periods of farming, enabling households to farm more than they would do if they were on their own;
- a family with many mouths to feed might let their young son stay in a more labour constrained household and help out with the daily activities there in return for food.

Another important factor for understanding the relations between wealth and money in the households is that the household survey only reflects the current income of the households, whereas the participatory social ranking exercise is based on a much deeper understanding of the dynamics of each household. For example, a household classed as rich might have accumulated many cattle during a long period of previous paid employment, or a seemingly poor young family with little cattle and money might be in the phase of being established and still have much support from the parental household.

While it is clear that monetary income alone can support very few families in the three villages, at the same time, despite most families practising some farming, participant observation and interviews made clear that farming on its own clearly supports very few, if any, families. In addition, when all households were asked to rank what was most important to the household (money, field, garden or animals), 80% reported money to be most important and 20% garden, field and animals to be the most important. A total of 52% of households gave lowest priority to the field when choosing between the above. Nevertheless it is clear that most families practise some farming and interviews revealed that a common view in the village is that farming, despite often not being the main livelihood strategy, is an important part of livelihood security.

In total, 75% of households have a field and 94% have a garden. In 2008, 86% of households had planted their garden, whereas only 54% had planted their fields. There are various reasons why people do not cultivate their fields, for example the field being too far away from the house, lack of labour in the household to do the farming (household members are too few, too young or too old), or poor fencing around the field area making it not worth the effort to plant considering the risk of the crop being eaten by cattle. Of the fields that are planted, many are not tended for the same reasons. The family might have had the intention to care for the field but as the household situation changed or the field area was damaged by cattle, they decided to abandon the crop. Gardens are easier to cultivate, not least for households with few adults, since they are next to the house and can be tended while also taking care of other chores. The proximity to the house also makes the garden easier to protect from grazing animals. Furthermore, gardens are less costly to fence since they are commonly fenced by bushy vegetation rather than expensive fencing material. Farming in the field is more dependent on money than farming in the garden for various reasons. While many people without access to draught cattle or the means to rent a tractor manually hoe their garden, very few would consider it possible or worth the investment to hoe a whole field. For the households that own livestock (69% of households), the garden is easily fertilised by manure due to its proximity to the kraal (enclosure for livestock), whereas it is much more common to use chemical fertilisers in the field, livestock manure being very heavy and bulky to transport and apply. Weeding and harvesting in the field also require more labour

and more continuous time spent, while the garden can be tended occasionally alongside other household work. Households with limited labour therefore commonly have difficulties tending the field if they cannot arrange for extra labour.

To understand the relatively low reliance on, and investment in, farming the results here must be analysed taking into account the history of the region as discussed in the beginning of this chapter[37]. As the possibilities for rural populations to derive a living from the land have been continuously undermined for a long period, the low reliance on farming is not a surprise. Social networks for farm labour have in many instances been damaged, while financial, land and labour constraints have long limited, and continue to limit, the possibilities to invest in farming.

Households run by the older generation commonly assign more importance to farming than younger households. Several younger households that do not plant gave no specific reason for this in interviews but generally did not regard farming as an option. The findings in the village correspond well with the cyclic character of farming mentioned earlier in this chapter (McAllister, 1992; Hajdu, Chapter 6, this volume). Today in the villages very few households have succeeded in securing a regular monetary income from business or work to live on but despite this, farming has commonly not replaced paid work as way of securing a livelihood in young families and farming to any larger extent is still mainly a feature of the older generation. Information from interviews and participant observation suggest that this has two main causes. Firstly, despite young adults today rarely being able to secure paid employment, they still see this as their role and do not identify themselves as farmers (confirming findings by Bryceson (2004) about the strong urban-rural links in South Africa and the persistent perception of the city being the place to earn money, despite a lack of employment opportunities). Secondly, and related to this, young households seldom have the start-up capital to begin farming. However, many younger households still work on their parents' farm and receive some crops in exchange. This means that there are more families relying on field produce than there are fields planted.

[37] While not being the focus in this chapter, naturally current national and global trends in agriculture and development thinking also affect local practices and hence have to be analysed for understanding the local situation.

The common understanding in the villages (irrespective of age) is that farming needs some monetary input for buying fertiliser, hiring draught cattle or a tractor, etc., indicating that the link of dependency remains between paid work and agriculture (Hendricks, 1990; Bryceson, 2004). As an example, 22% of households reported that they had paid to hire a tractor or cattle for ploughing their field and 60% reported that they had bought chemical fertiliser. Bearing in mind that only 54% of the households cultivated a field, this is a high percentage. Cattle are owned by 40% of households and not all of these have enough cattle or cattle that are fit for ploughing. Apart from young households engaging less in farming than older households, leaving the field uncultivated is more common in the group of households classed as very poor, which is not surprising given the fact that poor households are often defined by both lack of money and lack of labour.

At the same time, even those households that farm comparatively extensively do not practise it as a commercial enterprise. While many households claim to sell some bags of maize to neighbours in the event of a good harvest or if they are in need of money, farm produce is exchanged for money to a very limited extent. The small size of the fields and the fact that produce goes not only to the immediate family but also to others who have e.g. provided labour means that farming alone cannot provide for household security (as also argued by e.g. De Wet, 1990; Hendricks, 1990).

Maize is the dominant crop, being planted in 95% of gardens (in 78% of cases together with other plants) and in all planted fields (intercropped with beans and/or pumpkin in 50% of cases). People divide maize into their traditional 'Xhosa maize' varieties (which can then be subdivided into different types depending on their properties), 'maize from the shop' and 'maize from the project'. Project maize and maize from the shop are commonly seen as the same type of maize by locals. These are contrasted to the traditional Xhosa varieties, which local people feel they know more about. Distinctions between different types of maize seeds coming from the shops or the project are seldom made. The major difference that people cited between the Xhosa maize and the project maize is that the project maize gives higher yields than the Xhosa maize and that they were told during the MFPP that

the project maize, unlike the traditional varieties, was not to be replanted because it would not give as good yields the following year. Of the gardens that were cultivated in 2008, 71% were planted with Xhosa maize, 19% with maize seeds bought in a shop and 18% with project maize. Of the fields that were cultivated, 70% were planted with Xhosa maize, 14% with shop-bought maize seeds and 23% with project maize. The number of fields planted with Xhosa maize was underestimated in the survey, as participant observation and in-depth interviews revealed that those who had planted project maize commonly also planted some Xhosa maize, even though this was seldom reported in the survey.

> *"When asked to speak freely about the differences between Xhosa maize and project maize, 26% of respondents said that in their experience project maize gives higher yields and 73% said that it grows faster, but 53% claimed that project maize is not as long-lived in storage as Xhosa maize. Many respondents highly appreciated the faster ripening of project maize compared with Xhosa maize, but found it problematic that it is difficult to store. Despite appreciating some aspects of project maize, many households had kept some of their Xhosa maize. To fully grasp the reasons for this, data have to be further analysed, but for many Xhosa maize is kept both as a form of security and because it is preferred for some specific purposes. Many claim that Xhosa maize is more nutritious for chickens than project maize and some prefer it for preparing traditional foods. Some gave no more specific reason for why they kept their traditional maize varieties than that they prefer their old Xhosa maize."*

9. Xopozo's engagement in the MFPP

When Xopozo entered the MFPP in the 2003/2004 planting season, there was a village meeting where the MFPP was introduced as a project that would eradicate poverty and introduce mechanisation and new seeds. Prior to the project start, the seed company had trials in Xopozo and in the beginning of the project a couple of days' training was provided by the seed company in how to use the new seeds and what could be expected from them. There was also some training by a consultancy

firm regarding the agronomic aspects of maize growing. There was no training provided regarding the economic and administrative aspects involved in commercialising agriculture. All training was conducted as information meetings and there was no practical training in the field. Not all participants in the MFPP took part in the training.

In total, 36% of households took part in the MFPP. Initial analysis of interview data indicates that those who did not take part in the MFPP often were not allowed to, either because they did not currently plant their field or because their field was too rocky or otherwise inaccessible for a tractor. In addition, some villagers chose to leave the programme when they found out that they had to make some monetary contribution towards buying inputs. A few also decided to wait and see how the programme worked before deciding whether to join or not and many who did so did not join in the end when they saw how the plantings were delayed for several months into the planting season.

Of those who took part, many specified that they appreciated the faster ripening and higher yield of the new seeds and the mechanical assistance provided, since the cost of hiring a tractor is unaffordable for many people. People mainly saw the project as a possibility to try new seeds and to get agricultural support. However, it is clear that people did not feel that they had any say as to how the project should be implemented. Rather they accepted what was offered and then later tried to modify it to fit with their local understanding of farming. The view of development projects offered by local people in interviews and informal talks was that projects come and go, and since they cannot be relied on to deliver what they promise, it is best to not invest too heavily in them. With this lack of consultation and lack of trust, there was no logical reason for local people to put too much effort and risk into the project.

Although locals perceived that they had no say in how the programme should be realised, the way they acted on the programme shows that they actively tested the content and adopted what they regarded as logical, beneficial and suitable for their own farming, whereas they did not comply (at least after a while) with parts of the programme that were not seen as useful or did not make sense. A couple of

examples can illustrate this. Though there is a strong awareness amongst the participants in the project that seeds from the project should not be saved since this will cause a decline in yields, several villagers tried to replant seeds anyway to see for themselves. Many also carried out small trials comparing new seeds with their traditional Xhosa varieties. Despite being advised against intercropping the maize with pumpkin and beans due to herbicide sprayings (that were ultimately not performed), many participants have returned to doing so. According to data presented above, a number of households (18%) have also planted project maize in their gardens, despite the intention from the MFPP administration being to plant only the fields with the new maize. Several households that were initially excluded from the project due to having unsuitable fields or not currently planting their fields still received project seeds from the chief, seemingly with the intention that all who wanted to should be allowed to benefit from the new seeds rather than focusing on establishing a limited number of potential commercial farmers as the MFPP organisation intended.

Before the 2007/08 planting season Xopozo was expelled from the programme. Different reasons for this were given by the chief and the mentor for the MFPP in the area, but this is certainly not an isolated case. A substantial number of the villages that participated in the MFPP were eventually excluded due to failure to pay back the conditional grants. In the beginning of the MFPP, late deliveries of inputs and problems with the machinery contractors led to poor harvests, which resulted in participants in several areas coming to an agreement with the MFPP management about not having to pay back the conditional grant for the first year. In later years of the project, however, the participants were expected to pay and when they failed to do so, many were expelled.

The conditional grants were intended to be provided at the beginning of every season to pay for inputs. The participants were then expected to pay back an increasing percentage of the grants at around harvest time every year to be accepted for the following season of the MFPP, the idea being that the successive increase in yields that should be realised as participants moved towards more a ‘modern’ and ‘efficient’ style of agriculture would enable this. Maize yields were commonly estimated to increase around three-fold compared with the yields

produced using the smallholder practices and traditional seeds that the MFPP intended to replace.

There was much confusion amongst villagers in the study area regarding payback of the conditional grants. Many people had heard that they should make some sort of contribution towards the project, but many, including the chief, understood this to be a contribution in terms of sharing the harvest with the project (similarly to what happened during the TRACOR interventions). Many locals expressed concern that they did not know from year to year whether they would be expected to share their harvest with the project and many worried that they would not make ends meet if that were the case. At one point the steering committee in the village tried to collect 200 rand from each of the participants to pay back the expected share of the grant. Some households contributed and others did not, and it is unlikely that a sufficient amount of money was raised.

Even when the plantings occurred on time, average yields in the three villages did not increase as much as expected by the MFPP, which also limited smallholders' possibilities to pay back the conditional grant. There are several reasons why yields did not increase as anticipated. It is clear that the inputs delivered from the MFPP were shared between more smallholders than intended by the MFPP. As a result, few fields were planted with only new seeds from the project and most fields were planted with a variety of traditional seeds and the higher yielding seeds from the project. Due to the sharing of inputs between households, the amount of chemical fertiliser applied to each field was presumably also less than intended. In addition, many households saved seeds and fertiliser to use in the following season if the project did not come back. In the light of local distrust of government programmes, this is a logical way of using the resources at hand, but it undermined the possibility for the MFPP to realise its goals.

Furthermore, the fact that people received free seeds, use of machinery and chemical inputs in the project did not mean that they had money left over to invest in the following MFPP season. Since the majority of households have a very limited budget, money that the household 'saved' on receiving free inputs was often used to fill another gap in the household budget. In addition, if the households had not

received free inputs from the MFPP, village data clearly show that they would not have bought inputs for the amounts of money used in the MFPP and hence the cost of inputs was not reasonable from the perspective of the local households. As mentioned above, the monetary income to most households is commonly too small to allow for any savings, making it difficult for households to have money available to pay for project costs at harvesting. In addition, at harvest time the local market is flooded with maize, so it is not profitable to sell maize to cover costs at that time of year.

In the words of one very poor old woman who took part in MFPP but who has stopped planting her field and garden now due to old age and lack of labour and finance (translated from Xhosa)

> *"I am not noticing any help from that project because they only brought the fertilisers and the maize but in the end of the day they wanted […] money; money that I do not have because I am struggling."*

10. Views of smallholder agriculture in the MFPP

> *"Any scheme which makes people look to grants, disempowers them"*
> (ECDA, unknown c).

> *"[The] participation by farmers in the responsible investment of their own resources, is crucial to the success of the scheme, in providing support to enable farmers to produce without the debilitating effect of becoming dependent of Government hand outs. This dependency has occurred in the past. When the Government schemes were discontinued, productivity stopped and people were unable to continue on their own. The Massive Food Programme is designed to empower people to enter fully into sustainable, profitable, agricultural production."*
> (ECDA, 2004b).

In achieving the goals of the MFPP, the conditional grant scheme is given a central role. The focus on conditional grants can be seen as a reaction to the criticisms expressed about previous agricultural development programmes in the homelands failing to improve local conditions (ECDA, 2004b; Damgaard Hansen, 2006). As the two quotes above clearly illustrate, the major problem with previous interventions, as interpreted in the MFPP, was that they did not give any responsibility to local smallholders and did not demand anything in return for the aid provided. The MFPP aims to avoid the mistakes of previous development initiatives by not making local people passive receivers. This is done solely by the introduction of grant conditionality.

The intention with the conditional grants is described very similarly in independent accounts by the coordinator of technology development for the MFPP, who was responsible for designing the MFPP, and the administrative head of the MFPP. They explained that during apartheid, a lot of money was given to the homelands by the South African government and the Transkei government then supported peasants with government handouts and tractor schemes such as TRACOR without insisting on, or even expecting, any contribution from the local smallholders. These 30 years (referring to the period when the Transkei was self-governed) of dependency have now created a situation where local people expect the government to help them without asking for anything in return. Previous projects have been major financial failures, since local people have found ways to extract more benefits than intended, at the expense of the government. To prevent this from being repeated, the MFPP was designed with conditionality built in (coordinator of technology development MFPP and administrative head of the MFPP, pers. comm., 2008).

No connection is being made between the perceived lack of engagement by smallholders in the MFPP and the fact that this programme gave no room for locals to take part in the planning procedure or to influence the design of the programme. Studies concluding that top-down interventions and the focus on commercial agriculture are major reasons for previous failures (cf. De Wet, 1990; McAllister, 1992) are not acknowledged at all, while the top-down approach of the MFPP is justified by the claim that those planning the programme were very knowledgeable about agriculture and that it would have taken much more time to get any results if

it had been implemented in a more participatory manner (coordinator of technology development MFPP, pers. comm., 2008).

When trying to explain why the MFPP largely failed to successfully introduce commercial farming practices, one answer given by both the coordinator of technology development and the administrative head of the MFPP is that it does not fit with the mindset of local smallholders, who are perceived as practising farming in a '*casual and opportunistic*' way (coordinator of technology development). However, no argument is put forward as to how the new techniques could have been introduced differently or why they do not fit with the mindset of smallholders. While talking about wanting to engage local smallholders in the process of becoming commercialised, the training and agricultural extension services on commercialising agriculture provided by the MFPP was as good as non-existent, as discussed above. Following the historically dominant development thinking of African culture and practices being inferior to European culture and practices (Eriksson Baaz, 2002), the problem with introducing commercial agriculture is explained as being inherent in the nature of smallholders, rather than being a problem caused by the MFPP implementers failing to adapt their methods to fit the smallholders' situation.

Lastly, the discussion about sustainable cropping practices further highlights how local practices are seen as the major reason for the local situation, again implying that local people cannot take responsibility for their faming:

> *"The Province has embarked on a programme to change from destructive soil cultivation practices"*
> (ECDA, unknown d).

> *"Traditional methods of cultivation have led to massive soil erosion and land degradation, rendering many thousands of hectares of land useless"*
> (ECDA, 2004b).

> *"The Massive Food Production Programme was initiated by the Department of Agriculture in order to […] change the current destructive*

> *farming practices through applying environmentally friendly cultivation and production methods"*
> (ECDA, unknown b)

Despite the intention to create independent farmers, local participants are not seen as partners in the MFPP but as incompetent beneficiaries degrading their own livelihood base. The coordinator of technology development (pers. comm., 2008) most clearly attributes the problems with the MFPP to smallholders. He paints a clear picture of smallholders as lazy, trying to get benefits from government projects without contributing. Local people do not take any pride in working hard, he argues:

> "*if I as a peasant person can get the government to work for me, what a pleasure!*"
> (coordinator of technology development MFPP, pers. comm., 2008)

The examples above show how the ideas of local practices being environmentally destructive and smallholder behaviour being the main obstacle to establishing vibrant farming have permeated the planning and implementation of MFPP, just as in previous development programmes. The obvious reasons for the current situation, such as the lack of land or money for investing in farming, are not included in the analysis and local land degradation is seen and targeted as an exclusively local problem. Rather than seriously trying to understand why farming is practised (or not practised) today in the rural areas and identifying the kind of programme that would be needed to help rural smallholders, the MFPP has adhered to old stereotypes of smallholder farming as destructive and inefficient and smallholders as passive and dependent on government handouts.

11. Discussion and conclusions: Stereotypical views of smallholders are still shaping agricultural development

This chapter shows that the evolutionary view of development that so strongly influenced the general development discourse for decades, putting 'the West' above 'the Rest' on the evolutionary ladder, still strongly influences the South African

development discourse in general and agricultural development projects in particular. The fact that the modernisation paradigm still has such a major influence on the agricultural development discourse in South Africa is not surprising given the fact that this view of development is reflected so strongly in the general discourse on agricultural development. This is exemplified in this chapter by the highly influential World Bank Report 'Agriculture for Development' (World Bank, 2007), which has been shown by several authors (Havnevik et al., 2007; McMichael, 2009; Scoones, 2009) to internalise the modernisation paradigm and focus on the introduction of 'modern' industrial farming techniques as the only way forward for developing countries.

The stronghold of the modernisation paradigm can be noted in two major assumptions that have formed part of development interventions from colonial times to the present in South Africa:

- that African farmers are backwards and lazy
- that commercial farming modelled on the West is the recipe for development.

In addition to these two points, and related to them, the third feature of South African development thinking still shown to be present today is the failure to connect local problems to the systematic oppression of local people by the colonial and apartheid regimes.

As described in this chapter, economic and political interventions in South Africa have had major effects on local land use practices and have systematically undermined the possibility for smallholders to use their land productively (de Wet, 1990; Hendricks, 1990; McAllister, 1992; Bryceson, 2004). The history of oppressive interventions has also created an environment where development projects are not questioned openly by those targeted. While acknowledging this, it is important to realise that local people are not, and never have been, passive receivers of interventions from outside (Fay, 2003; van Binsbergen et al., 2004; Robbins, 2004) but, as is also indicated by data presented in this chapter, have adopted and responded to new policies and interventions in various ways that have made sense to them locally. However, these reactions to interventions by local people have commonly been misunderstood by those implementing development programmes as local ignorance and laziness/passivity.

As results from village data and interviews with the MFPP officials show, the efforts made by local people to make development interventions fit with local realities, e.g. through continuing to save and replant seeds, intercropping maize with pumpkins and beans, sharing and saving the new inputs or just trying to put a minimum of effort into a programme when there is uncertainty that it will deliver what is promised, are interpreted by the MFPP administration as evidence of local people being lazy and impossible to train. This seemingly reinforces the belief amongst the officials that top-down interventions are the only functional option as local people are incompetent farmers and unable to take care of their own environment, creating a negative spiral of dysfunctional top-down interventions.

The idea that commercial farming (in these programmes meaning large-scale rationalised farming with more mechanisation and chemical inputs to secure larger quantities of outputs in the form of one crop) is a more viable poverty reduction measure than smallholder farming (small-scale, largely non-commercial with few external inputs and practised as a part-time occupation) has been criticised repeatedly for not taking into account the role that smallholder farming plays for the livelihood of poor rural households (de Wet, 1990; McAllister, 1992; Netting, 1993; Ellis, 2000; McAllister, 2000). Smallholder farming as a part-time household activity serves a very important security function for many households (Netting, 1993; Ellis, 2000) and the move towards commercial farming is not necessarily wanted by, or possible for, all locals. Furthermore, commercial farming is not necessarily the best solution for reducing poverty, as it moves control away from the local farmer to a greater reliance on external inputs and services and creates greater susceptibility to price fluctuations. Directing farming towards commercialisation might therefore prevent it being used as a backup and security strategy when other livelihood strategies fail. In addition, the 'modern-style' commercial agriculture that has been proposed in the programmes has been questioned on the grounds that it is highly dependent on non-renewable resources. It is neither possible nor desirable that future agricultural development should take the same direction as the industrial agriculture we have today in the West (Rydberg and Haden, 2006). The non-renewable resources that have been so important for the agricultural revolution in the West will not be available to the same extent in the future as they

have been in the past and there is also a will to limit their use globally due to environmental concerns.

With the knowledge that the inefficiency and low production of smallholder farming is contested, both generally by research on agriculture in the South (Netting, 1993) and specifically by South African research in the former homelands (McAllister, 2000; Andrew and Fox, 2004), the data presented here make it clear that farmland in the homelands has the potential to yield more produce than at present. Research referred to in this chapter shows that agriculture often provides a negligible part of household income (Hajdu, 2006; Mfono et al., 2008) and data from this PhD project show that only about half of all fields in the study area are currently cultivated. However, while recognising that agricultural development programmes such as the MFPP understandably see this potential and want to use it as a measure to reduce local poverty, their failure to understand local conditions and practices clearly obstructs the possibilities for improving the situation for local smallholders.

While there are smallholders (often belonging to the most vulnerable in the community) who do not have the possibility or will to practise farming more intensively but still consider the farming they do to be an important measure to secure a livelihood, there are other smallholders who have the will to move towards more commercially orientated and intensive farming. Agricultural development with the intention of improving food security and reducing poverty needs to take into account both of these groups and, unlike many of the development initiatives discussed in this chapter, avoid favouring commercially orientated farming at the expense of those needing and wanting to practise farming on a less intensive level. To enable those smallholders who want and have the potential to invest more in farming to do so without taking away the land as a security base for the most vulnerable households, the local development issue has to be connected to the issue of land redistribution in South Africa. Furthermore, an issue that has clearly failed in all the programmes discussed above, and which is an essential part of enabling smallholders to move towards a commercialised agriculture, is the provision of suitable training and extension services. Local people are poor and have access to very little land, monetary assets and suitable agricultural extension. It is clear that farming has little potential to be the sole livelihood for households or to

produce a surplus for families unless smallholders are given more land in combination with financial services and the know-how that is crucial for any successful commercial farmer.

Even at this rather early stage of analysing village data, it is clear that despite the obvious potential to increase farm productivity in the villages studied, the main problem with the MFPP, as with previous development interventions, has been the failure to see local people as equal partners, to understand and integrate local knowledge and practices with development initiatives, to acknowledge the importance of farming as a part-time activity and as a security strategy for many households and to connect the agricultural development discourse to the issue of land redistribution.

Recorded interviews

Co-ordinator of Technology Development within the MFPP, ECDA, East London 12/06/08

Administrative head of MFPP, ECDA, East London 10/06/08

Mentor for the MFPP, Port Edward 06/05/08

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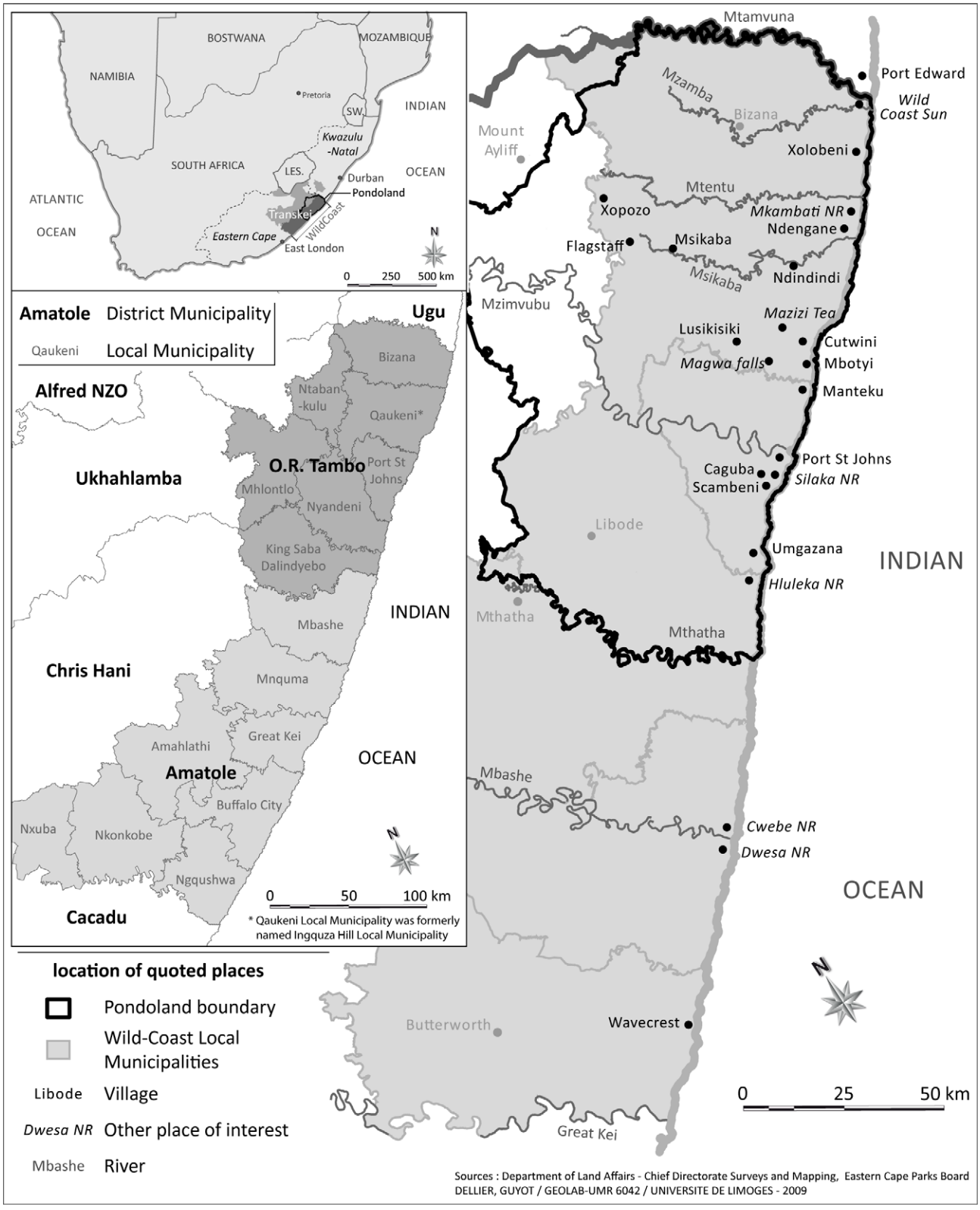

Figure X: Location Map

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The "Wild Coast", an alternative name for the coastal Pondoland (Eastern Cape, South Africa), is one of the focal points of strong eco-frontier dynamics, like scenic landscape tourism and biodiversity conservation. Nonetheless, beyond the Wild Coast there is a changing rurality. The end of apartheid has opened an era of potential changes for Pondoland, starting with the lodging of land claims on historically seized land. If Pondoland local development has to adjust to the global economy, new outsiders' appropriation challenges, like mining projects or future tourist resorts, are also a reality to consider. Today, the "Wild Coast" is confirmed as the branding name for the coastal Pondoland to become a major eco-tourism attraction. Are outsiders and insiders able and willing to work together towards an integrated Pondoland in order to avoid partition of the coast from its rural hinterland? Several authors contribute to the making of this book of interest for eco-conscious tourists planning to visit the Wild Coast, for students and academics researching the new South Africa and for all actors willing to commit themselves to building a better future for Pondoland.

Julien Dellier – Sylvain Guyot
The two editors are both geographers at the University of Limoges, UMR 6042 CNRS GEOLAB (France).
The various chapters are written by committed researchers working on rural Pondoland. They have created a "Pondoland Research Group" that first met in Limoges in May 2009 during the International Conference on Eco-Frontiers.